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JOEL PORTE (Editor)

Emerson in His Journals
588pp, Harvard University Press.
£17.50
0 674 24861 9

Ralph Waldo Emerson died on April 27, 1882, less than a month from his seventy-ninth birthday. At the time, he was regarded as America's leading man of letters, a natural resource who, even in his premature senility, was in demand simply as a presence. Like a monument, he marked the spot for Americans: "Here thought occurred."

The intervening century has not lowered his contemporaries' estimate of him. He has, it is true, been in and out of fashion, but force flows steadily beneath such surface currents. The young Henry Adams, unwilling to accept Emerson as an influence, none the less recognized that in his America there was a third power together with politics and commerce: it was Emerson and the ideas that he had caused history, could rise above his world and work his will upon it. Nor could Henry James follow Emerson, especially into the social barrens that surrounded his celebration of individualism to the point where the perfection of society was visualized as a collection of persons so self-sufficient that like the planets they repelled one another. But this friend of his father's was for James a force to be viewed affectionately. His American heroes, such as Christopher Newman, are unmaterialistic millionaires who regard the objective world as powerless to resist their idealistic wills, and when in 1904, James mourned the passing of the America he preferred (as a place in the mind, to be sure, rather than as a place of residence), he in good part mourned the disappearance of the Emersonian tone.

Meanwhile, of course, Emerson had literal followers. Thoreau and Whitman being the most prominent, who were to exert enormous influence, and he stirred those who both admired and yet were outraged by his cosmic optimism, such as Melville, to their greater efforts. Unsystematic and vulnerable as his thought proclaimedly is, it lies close to the core of Nietzsche and plays over the pages of Borges.

The Emerson who was of such consequence to so many who are consequential and the Emerson who continues to be of intellectual, moral, and - why should the term be avoided? - spiritual consequence to today's reader is to be located in the obvious places: first his major essays, next his poetry, then his lesser essays. Finding him there we find him in the place he wanted to be. If he says, as he famously did, "There is no history. There is only Biography", he means to call attention to the fact that the real (which for him means ideal) life of the artist is in his work rather than the events of his life.

In another entry to be found in Joel Porte's selections from the *Journals*, whence, indeed, all my quotations from Emerson are taken, he writes, "The life of a great artist always is thus inward, a life of no events. Shakespeare has no biography worth seeking. Dante by how much he had a biography is so much the worse artist." If this is austere, Emerson sees it to the bottom: "As a good chimney burns up all its own smoke, so a good philosopher consumes all his own events in his extraordinary intellectual performances."

To seek Emerson's life, then, is from his viewpoint to seek it in his public writings, not his *Journals*. No wonder that from Margaret Fuller to William Dean Howells his literary contemporaries recorded great admiration for the living monument with whom they conversed and great disappointment in the impersonality, the "chill of potential disapprobation" as Howells put it, that informed the interchanges. No wonder that neighbour Hawthorne, who wrote novels, could spend hours in his presence with scarcely a word exchanged, or that the next generation, in the person of James, fled a scene which did not so much lack as positively resist social denity.

"To find a story which I thought I

remembered in Quentin Durward". Emerson writes,

I turned over a volume until I was fairly caught in the old foolish trap & read & read to the end of the novel. Then as often before I feel indignant to have been duped & dragged after a foolish boy & girl, to see them at last married & portioned & I instantly turned out of doors like a beggar that has followed a gay procession into the castle... These novels will give way by & by to diaries or autobiographies; - captivating books if only a man knew how to choose among what he calls his experiences that which is really his experience, and how to record truth truly!

Such an objection to novels is an objection to participation in events that finally have no consequence for one; the characters' experience, that is, is not an experience for the reader. When you finish an essay by Emerson, its author implies, or when you finish assertions of the first person singular as representative man, assertions such as *Walden* or "Song of Myself", you will not find yourself turned out of the castle to resume your humdrum life. Emerson's objection to novels was carried to nearly grotesque extremes: "I am at a loss to understand why people hold Miss Austen's novels at so high a rate, which seem to me vulgar in tone, sterile in invention, imprisoned in the wretched conventions of English society, without genius, wit, or knowledge of the world." "Knowledge of the world! Mr Emerson", we shout, "What possibly do you know about that, moving in your orbit from rural Concord to provincial Boston and back again?"

But he is dismayed to hear us call Miss Austen's settings the world and annoyed that we would measure Concord's worth by its social life. His power and his terror are that the world, the apple he intends to bite, is the universe itself. When he was a puzzled twenty-year-old contemplating his future, he wrote, "I see the world, human, brute, & inanimate nature; I am in the midst of them, but not of them." He wanted to know what *his* world was in the face of this world. At the age of thirty-eight, he is wiser but no less ambitious in his concept of the world that counts: "For this was I born & came into the Universe from the Universe, to do a certain benefit which Nature could not forego, nor I be discharged from rendering, & then immerse again into the holy silence & eternity, out of which as a man I arose."

This is the world of Emerson's essays and poems, yet it is not so freely giving distance from boy meets girl, man loses a loved one, old age dies, old age terrifies, rattlesnake bites, politician betrays, friend goes mad, as the theoretical comments suggest. The uniqueness of Emerson's voice consists in his ability to maintain the loftiness of an ideal viewpoint which sees reality as Me in relation to Not Me, while at the

same time conveying the sense that such a view proceeds from a life lived in acutely sensitive response to the daily events which are both all that happen to us and yet do not constitute the world. He talks scarcely at all about the everyday Ralph Waldo Emerson; the "I" of the essays is "mnn thinking". Yet he imparts an awareness of limits - of the petty as well as the mighty obstacles to will - even as he moves above them. This mixture of explicit, abstract idealism and implicit, practical experience is a conscious rhetorical strategy, one description of which he offers when he says:

All men talk about themselves, for 'tis all they know, but genius never needs to allude to his personality, as every person & creature he has seen serves him as an exponent of his private experience. So he communicates all his secrets, and endless autobiography, & never lets on that he means himself.

While it would be too arch to suggest that Emerson's essays contain buried novels, it is valid to take the clue of his essays as well as the poems is that of an imaginative artist rather than a philosopher. As early as his twentieth year, he explained his choice of the ministerial profession to himself by saying that "I have or had a strong imagination & consequently a keen relish for the beauties of poetry". At the same time, he went on, "My reasoning faculty is proportionately weak". Theology, then, is the best choice. "For the highest species of reasoning upon divine subjects is rather the fruit of a sort of moral imagination, than of the 'Reasoning Machines', such as Locke."

When he left the church for the lecture platform, he did so the more fully to exercise his imagination. In essay after essay he imagined an America in which nature was spirit rather than matter, in which the absence of social forms was the enabler of self-realization rather than the inhibitor of the good life. Adam, he felt, was a creator when he named the beasts and thus elevated them into the area of expression, and he too was a creator because the act of creation is the act of imagining what exists.

From his late adolescence Emerson kept his *Journals*. It is diary, workbook, filing cabinet, social commentary, financial account-book. Because he was a brilliant observer, a fine writer, and a gifted epigrammatist - and because he was Ralph Waldo Emerson - the *Journals*, or to give it its modern bibliographical identity, the *Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks*, forms the single greatest document of nineteenth-century American culture in existence. But it consists of more than three million words. Which should be published? And what, in the publishing, to do about the many deletion marks, additions - at a later time under an earlier date, or signals that the material has been or should be used in an essay?

Emerson's heirs - his son and grandson - edited the *Journals* according to their own literary notions and their sense of family privacy and Emersonian Olympianism, publishing selections in a series of volumes from 1904 to 1914. This series was followed by Bliss Perry's one volume of selections from it, *The Heart of Emerson's Journals* (1926).

Then, in 1960, modern literary scholarship having arrived at a state of maniacal distrust of anything less than everything, the science of bibliography having arrived at precise if infinitely fussy conventions for the presentation in print of all marks in a manuscript document, and the American economy having arrived at a point in which a surplus spill flowed towards the academy, the Harvard University Press with its board of learned editors commenced the publication of the complete *Journals*, down to the last penny in Emerson's budget and the most obscure quotation he ever copied or misquoted. In 1982, the project rests at thirteen volumes of marvellous material intermixed with the humdrum. The volumes exact not only a high pecuniary price from the purchaser but a high physical price from the reader. The thousands of pages are so profusely strewn with slashes, angle brackets, doubled vertical lines, and all the other members of the family of diplomatic printing marks that to proceed through a paragraph is to bump the head, stub the toe, bang the shoulder, and bark the shin.

Still, there it all is for the specialist, and now that it exists the wiser economy is to value it rather than fret about the many kinds of cost it has exacted. Its existence in this form, of course, necessitates a sampler just as in its earlier form it necessitated Perry's selections. Professor Porte has met this requirement well, and since he is aiming at intelligent readers rather than scholarly fretters he has swept away the thumb-tacks, projecting ledges and blank walls that envelop the words in the full edition.

Porte's principle of selection is totally sane. He cites the editors of the larger project: "In the first printing of the *Journals* we lost much of Emerson. The Montaigne in him was duly overshadowed by the Plotinus, the brooding doubter by the cosmic optimist, the private man in his freedom and infinitude by the public man in the confining garments of 'the gentleman'." Taking his cue here, Porte selects passages that exhibit the brooding-private-Montaigne Emerson beyond his other facets. Even this criterion leaves him with a great deal to choose from, and nobody who has read the *Journals* in its entirety will be without a quarrel about some omitted favourite: still the book very well accomplishes what the editor set out to do.

The Emerson Porte arranges for our pleasure and edification is not a stranger; we have no difficulty



connecting him with the writer of the essays. But he is a figure whom we knew in outline rather than in detail, and it is nice to have him step forth from the half-shadows that used to invest him. An especial bonus is that this Emerson was the thinker of thoughts that did not receive full development in his essays so that in letting the light play on him Porte is also permitting a number of provocative but fragmentary ideas to breathe the air after more than a century of confinement.

The title, *Emerson in His Journals*, is chosen advisedly. It is Emerson, not Emersonianism or the Concord Sage or the Representative American, who is selected out from the thousands of pages in which his person blends into such other categories. Here we follow his troubled reaction to the person of Margaret Fuller; his witty exasperations with the pomposities of Boston Unitarianism; his broodings on the conflict between the demands of the creative life and those of social conscience, as embodied most strongly in the anti-slavery movement; and his relish for the mingling of thundering platitudes and comic provincialities in the Calvinistic elders of his family. We meet Daniel Webster and Henry David Thoreau, Abraham Lincoln and Nathaniel Hawthorne. And throughout these pages Emerson indulges a witty scepticism which he allows or at the least reins back in the essays. The Emerson present here is not the "other side" of the public figure; there is more continuity than that. Rather he is to the Emerson of the essays as a brilliant student on vacation is to himself when back in school. Clearly it is the same person who is replenishing himself, but there is less mental discipline and, less temperamental consistency, more of the mentally robust and more emotional venting. This releases ideas that are not to be found developed in the public writings.

An example of this, most apt for our times, has to do with notions of

I.M. Edgell Rickword, 1898-1982

Not all bad, stopping writing verse before
Friends' deaths can overload the rift with ore.

Or so I tend to think, as I this day
Hear that you're dead, myself past seventy.

When, more than fifty years ago, I first
Lit on your work, already you'd been cursed

(It seemed then) by the fickle lyric muse
Velling the special beauties shown to you.

Still, all that happened was your words of praise
Thus limited, grew more precious through my days.

Though whether you were reconciled, dear friend,
To silence is far from answered by your end.

Roy Fuller

On the inflationary fringe

Nicholas Rankin

JORGE LUIS BORGES and ADOLFO BLOY CASARES

Chronicles of Bustos Domecq
Translated by Norman Thomas Di Giovanni
143pp. Allen Lane. £7.50.
0 7139 1109 3

In "The Sartorial Revolution" (1) Eduardo S. Bofarull, dandy of the Neoclassicist movement from 1923 to 1931, is revealed as an impoverished fake. His millionaire's hat, horn-rimmed glasses, moustache, collar, necktie, watch chain, white suit with set of imported buttons, gloves, handkerchiefs and boots have been painted on to his body. Even the moustache is his. It is Argentina that parades its banality beneath the Emperor of Europe's cultural clothing in *Chronicles of Bustos Domecq*, twenty satirical sketches by Borges and his friend and collaborator Adolfo Bloy Casares.

The two men met through Ocampo's *Sur* magazine around 1931; they shared the same passion for books. Their early collaborations included a commercial brochure for Bulgarian foodstuffs, written in a week at a *Paradise* restaurant, and an anthology of Fantastic Literature, compiled while they were annotating Sir Thomas Browne. They wrote comic detective stories under *nom de plume*; H. Bustos Domecq penned *Six Problems for Don Isidro Parodi* (1942) and many of the characters that book recur in the Chesteronian spoof "A Model for Death" (1946) by B. Suarez Lynch (not yet translated).

Originally written as pieces of journalism, the *Chronicles* were collected in 1967 into a book dedicated to Picasso. Joyce and Le Corbusier with an introduction by one Gervasio Montenegro, who recommends it as an "unforgettable vademecum" to "the depths of the novel, the lyric, the essay, conceptualism, architecture, sculpture, the theater and the whole gamut of audio-visual media". An important index compiled by the "author" himself rounds the book off.

The *Chronicles* mark the apotheosis of H. Bustos Domecq from pseudonym to persona. The author of *Now I Can Read!* (City of Rosario School Board), once referred to in a Parodi mystery as "that man from Santa Fe who got a story published and then it turned out it had already been written by Villiers de L'Isle Adam", is now a champion hack on the pretentious fringes of Buenos Aires. Eight of the *Chronicles* are literary "joints" through the cosmopolitan groves of Farnassus. Ramón Bonavena's *nouveau roman* "North-Northeast" features the north-eastern quadrant of his table, where a 2B pencil is brilliantly described in "only twenty-nine pages". For F. J. C. Loomis, the title is the work: "The text of *Pallet*, for example, consists solely of the word 'pallet'."

Words mean what Santiago Ginsberg wants them to, but Tulio Herrera's art scrupulously eschews them - along with sentences, characters, scenes, etc. Review a book? Hilario Lambkin Formont reproduces the blurb on the jacket, and ends by copying whole volumes.

The sketches are not all whimsical ideas taken to grotesque extremes, for something of Argentina glares through them. There is more truth than humour in the rise of mediocrity being chronicled in a language rich in around bombast, from the land where inflation became part of the economy only long after it was a birthright, a state of mind. Ironies turn into prophecies, or perhaps it is just that a blind man's vision is less deceived by age. "A Brand-New Approach" is about historical revisionism; Bustos Domecq asks "Does a military defeat suit a nation of patriots?" and replies "Certainly not." So-called "pure" history has become an act of faith, or honest revenge. "Mexico has thus recovered, in print, the oil-wells of Texas, and we here in the Argentine ... have recovered the South polar cap and its inalienable archipelago."

H. Bustos Domecq began in the timelessly dated world of whodunnits, and *Chronicles* has mysteries that cannot be revealed here. The reader must find alone the secret of G. A. Baralt's shoes ("The Brotherhood Movement"), the thing in Chubut sheep-rancher don Guillermo Blake's shed ("The Immortals") and why the last game of soccer was played in Buenos Aires on June 24, 1937 ("Esse est Percipi").

Norman Thomas di Giovanni's translation is in Continental American - "billboard", "boardwalk", "elevator", "mailbox", "mold" - which reads well enough aloud, but has not been revised for British publication. Borges and Bloy are not well served by careless punctuation and spelling. In addition, the jacket misspells Honorio while hyphenating and downgrading Adolfo Bloy Casares. The fame of Borges should not obscure the other, so memorably immortalized in the first page of the first story of *Ficciones*.

Chronicles of Bustos Domecq is conservative satire, the humoristic of funny names and the avant-garde rendered absurd. Characters such as the architect Hotchkiss de Estephano, gastronomic Ishmael Querido and the sinister Dr Narbondio could almost appear in the newspaper columns of Beachcomber or Peter Simple. Pot-boiling, of course, but even the dictionary sketch-books of a master are interesting. "Addicts" of Borges's jokes and puzzles (the phrase is J. S. Nappi's) will find irresistible fun in this book.

Falling short

Alan Hollinghurst

GRAHAM SWIFT
Learning to Swim and Other Stories
146pp. London Magazine Editions.
£7.95.
0 904388 46 8

Graham Swift is a young writer, but, as he has shown in his novels *The Sweet Shop Owner* and the outstanding *Shuttlecock*, he has an authority - of style, characterization, grasp on life - that is wholly free from middle self-exposure or faux-sophisticated self-consciousness. These concentrated, enigmatic stories address their subjects with such intelligent conviction and not left to be stumbled on by the reader, but are challengingly displayed; in most respects unimpeachable (their world is suburban, impoverished, glamorous, unsexual) they are like James's stories in the way they apply an almost scientific analytical cleverness to things in life which are forever vague, painful or imponderable. As in *Shuttlecock*, which disclosed how a middle-aged son investigated a crucially obscure episode in his father's life, Swift secures much of this authority precisely by considering how he and his generation stand with regard to the past, to the family, and to the patetic awareness, which any generation is bound to gather, of the way their experience has occurred repeatedly through history. Swift's ideas, that is to say, are large, and the revelation he wants each story to make, and the unembarrassed symbolism with which he achieves it; but his manner is meticulous, orderly and attentive.

Several of these stories are told in the first person, though a first person that can be neurotically unstable and therefore calculated and posturing. Married men talk of their professional and domestic lives in a tone that disconcerts by virtue of its very steadiness, a steadiness that holds psychological and emotional chaos at bay. "The Hypochondriac" is typical. The narrator is a doctor whose marriage has dried up, and whose wife then becomes pregnant. The ostensible motivation of the story is to explain the case of a young man who peppers him endlessly with imaginary complaints, of which he finally dies. After this the narrator himself has a nervous collapse. The doctor's whole procedure is one of analysis and

Subject peoples

Roger Owen

JOHN ARDEN
Silence Among the Weapons
Some events at the time of the failure of a republic
343pp. Methuen. £7.95.
0 413 49670 8

John Arden found it "embarrassing", he was to admit later, when the success of *Serjeant Musgrave's Dance* in 1959 transformed him into what he disdainfully describes as an "established" writer. He has in his day embraced the full orthodoxy of radical causes, and, in addition, waged single-handed wars with such cultural power bases as the Royal Shakespeare Company and even the ICA. Not for him, then, the warmth of institutional approval. Whether, after the relief of a period of relative public indifference, this novel, his first, will cause him similar embarrassments, remains to be seen.

His colours are flown bravely in the novel's dedication: "To the Subject Peoples - subjected, that is to say, to their own rulers, to someone else's, to us ..."

The tone is characteristically absolute and comprehensive, perhaps even faintly maniacal. Arden's plays suffer from a tendency to go "over the top" (though he would perhaps contend that there is no "top"). And indeed in

Silence Among the Weapons there is a kind of principled commitment to excess.

Like the plays it is crowded with people, or rather with types or "humours". The narrator is a Great-speaking half-Arab theatrical agent, a "fixer" from Ephesus, who with a bizarre troupe of fellow theatricals travels the Roman Mediterranean. They all become mixed up, at the highest level, with the political disputes of the Roman Republic in the First Century BC. There is a lot of action, marked by innumerable coincidences and sudden reversals. There is also a good deal of historical bombast, the wench-tickling, crotch-scratching kind. Those who know the plays will not be surprised to learn that extensive use is made of song, quotation and pastiche. There is also a great deal of blood. There are, here and there, more congenial and innocently pleasurable moments (parts of the novel are quite exciting), but the subject peoples should be warned that the author makes some tyrannous demands on them and they will not hard for small rewards.

The prose is colloquial, at best serviceable and unfussy. The main problems are a failure of narrative skill, and the density of the plot. Two early chapters which describe a theatrical or "showbiz" party are typical. As the guests arrive we are given a brief run down on each. The following passage indicates the overloading of information:

"They included another agent (civus and not theatre business and therefore not a rival), an aged philosopher who wrote commercially successful lines under an assumed name, a few actors from the municipal theatre, and a licensing officer from the town hall ... And, of course, Shoulderbone who introduced an Italian actor whom we had seen called Roscius, who ... and so on."

After a great deal of this kind of thing, the licentious booze-up which is reported in stultifying detail. A is sick over B; C and D quarrel over E; F nuzzles G's breasts; H touches up L; J goes for a pee. The dialogue, which seems to be assigned arbitrarily, is remorselessly reproduced.

The function of all this is to introduce the reader to a piece of political intrigue of some importance to the story. So the reader dutifully battles on, taking what small pleasures he can in the thought that people as big as Arden's are as small as we are. First Century BC were as awful as we are now, or, perhaps responding to Arden's invites to admire his skills as he transposes cultural chit-chat back a couple of thousand years, but in the end the multiplicity of speaking parts, even more tenuously imprinted on our minds than those before us, and the allusions to events already half-forgotten - all these make the task thankless one; the more so in that the overall political situation in which the scene is set is itself obscure.

The novel is intended, one suspects, as an allegory, perhaps akin to the similarly flat, crowded *Brought Paintings* which Arden admires and describes as "essentially theatrical" and "emblematic". Like most of the plays, the narrative is hijacked, and like them distanced by tricks of language and convention. The characters, for example, have grotesque nicknames such as Strychnine, Cuttlefish or Jumpy. The intention is to create an autonomous world, the very separateness of which will reflect irreducible truths about the human condition. Oddly, for a dramatist, Arden always tells his tales that he shows, and this book remains something willed rather than inspired.

An astonishing performance of this kind comes in "The Watch", which transcends realism in its story of a pocket-watch which magically gives longevity to the possessor. Like Capek's *Makropulos Case* it actually embraces the pathetic repetitiveness of human experience by creating a character, or characters, who can survive through many generations, bleached of feeling or interest in humanity while becoming ever more interesting to think about. The Polish narrator, a later inheritor of the watch, recounts the incredible incidents in an operationally intensified style strikingly at odds with the lack of feeling in the tale. Here the aesthetic control, and the recognition of a human desolation which is beyond expression, are memorably brought together.

SAMUEL BECKETT
III Seen III Said
Translated from French by the author
59pp. John Calder. £4.95.
0 7145 3895 7
Mal vu mal dit
76pp. Paris: Minuit.
Three Occasional Pieces
32pp. Faber. £1.25.
0 5711800 3

With every new thing that Samuel Beckett has written there has been the temptation to say "Here at last is the real Beckett: this is where it was all leading." That has allowed one again and again the retrospect needed in order to set out the true configuration of his work, to get his measure - in short, to have done with him. Until, unfortunately (can the man not take a hint?), more words of his arrive and we have to go through the process again. And now there is the awkward, obtrusive presence of *Mal vu mal dit*, which he has translated as *III Seen III Said*. Is there to be no end to it?

The design of *III Seen III Said* faces us once again with a mixture of the familiar and the strange. Ostensibly, an unnamed narrator strains to catch the detail of movement and appearance of an old woman in the final conduct of her last, solitary days; or rather ("what is the word? What the wrong word?") her end of days ("Night. When not evening night.") sitting, kneeling or lying still in her darkened hut or moving erratically across stony pastureland to visit a tomb, her presence, now vestigial, now fiercely scrutinized, is at all points overwhelming, even when the hollow omnipotence of narration is turned against her: "No shock were she already dead. As of course she is. But in the meantime more convenient not." Black dress, white hair, black eyes, white stones, observer observed: this grimly expectable quality is cut across by the twelve remote and enigmatic watchers surrounding the hut - and by the discovery, given now as remembered, now as invented, of objects: a key, a collar, a partition, a button-hook, a trap-door, a great-coat.

But what most of all disturbs the vision of the searching eye, as in sequence after sequence it reports its findings, is the irruption of rage: "Not endurable. Nothing for it but to close the eye for good and see her. Her and the rest. Close it for good and all and see her to death. ... Be shut off it all. On to the next. Close it for good this filthy eye of flesh." So narrator and narrated swing between control and dependence, invention and revenge, while the total telling is powerful enough to drive beyond the particulars on which these rest, to contain even the thrust of the final words: "One moment now. One last. Grace to breathe that void. Know happiness."

Such indications can give some idea of direction and emphasis, while the quotations allow some sampling of the writing. For a closer sense of *III Seen III Said* (or *Mal vu mal dit*) we could consider three related elements, opaquely present in all Beckett's work: a particular conception of age; the field of the words "I" and/or "self"; and the question of language. If the second and third seem daunting, we do all the same have a less awesome point of entry: the fact, and the results, of Beckett's translations. Even if French-speakers could read him only in French and English-speakers only in English, there would still be one person inescapably aware of his double venture: Samuel Beckett. And it is a double venture, since the primary reality - that which can subsequently be translated - may be either English or French.

The phenomenon is not, of course, unknown. But the closest parallel - with Nabokov - underscores the difference between the two writers, rather than the resemblance. Nabokov's gifts can't hide from us the extent to which he glorifies in his mastery of English, his wrestling of sovereignty from the slovenly native-born. The dispossessed and unforgetting expatriate had, one might say, a motive; the forging of a uniquely adequate voice had, among other

The voice of childhood and great age

George Craig

things, a purpose which was not literary only. No such conditions exist for Beckett. To write at all (to allow others to see the investment of the self in language) is extraordinary enough: to invest the self in two languages and not disavow either is - the phrase seems just right - something else. To start with, the norms of any language are so closely tied to the relevant general culture that even the unchallengeable bilingual sketches in a different self merely by saying or writing "the same thing" in each of his two languages. For anyone not born to bilingualism, the joys, anxieties and compromises that go with the deployment of the second language are, quite literally, endless. And since Beckett has chosen not to recast himself entirely in his second language, that goes on being so. The early writings in French allowed (or forced) a break with limitless fluency, with the dangerous rhetoric (dangerous, that is, in the shadow of Joyce) of I-can-do anything-with-words; and at the same time the creation of a new verbal theatre in which to see and hear what might be done with words. And that in turn was eventually to allow (as between, say, *Wait* and *That Time*) a re-working of the relation with English.

Translation, however, cuts across these processes and brings a new strangeness. In translating into English Beckett has maintained the imaginative priority of the French texts and produced versions rather than new inventions. But these versions are astonishingly unpredictable. Here is a passage from *Pour finir encore* (1976): "Il portait vis-à-vis et souvent se relâit si bien qu'à tour de rôle ils ouvrent la marche à reculons. A celui qui la ferme revient qui sait le soin de gouverner un peu comme par petites touches le barreur le skiff." The French is most certainly idiosyncratic, but consider now the equivalent passage from *For to End Yet Again*, the translation issued in the same year: "They carry face to face and relay each other often so that turn about they backward lead the way. His who follows who knows to shape the course much as the coxswain with light touch the skiff." The Gallicisms seemed at the time to raise serious worries about Beckett's hold on English. And yet, within a few months, there was *That Time* with its utter ease of movement. But when we come on to *III Seen III Said* we find, for example: "Any other would renounce. Avow. No one" for the comparatively ordinary "Tout autre renoncera. Avouera. Personne". Here not only is "avow" startling in a way that the French verb is not, but, without the indication of tense and function, mysterious where the French is not.

The point of these remarks is not (what would be grotesque) to give S. Beckett a low mark for translation. It is rather to suggest that, allowing for his respect of priority and his reputed distaste for the chore of translating, the signs are that he is exploring a verbal no-man's-land where neither French nor English holds sway. The occasional Gallicism may catch the eye; it hardly matters when compared with, say, the appearance in *III Seen III Said* of the blithely charged exclamation "Eloime!" when there is no corresponding word in the French - or in French. Or again, the rendering of the immediately graspable "Au delà l'inconnu" by "Beyond the unknown" or, in "The Calmative", written nearly forty years

ago, the switch from the vocally demanding monosyllables of "les grandes chutes rouges du coeur" to the rhythms of "the great red lapses of the heart". Insertions, omissions, shifts of tone and association, alternations of new and old, ear and eye: even as the "chore" of translating goes forward, the writer's attention is turned inward, to the sources and resources of his own utterance. Elsewhere we find comparable experiment and discovery: the way in which the "innocent" density of stage directions is taken up in later writings as the language of narration.

This is, too, something more than either play or professional conscientiousness. The inaccessible linguistic explorations of which we see only the result are paralleled in the resolute withdrawal of the man, the closely guarded privacy. But they are also paralleled in that projection we know as the voice of Samuel Beckett. Because we can cast an eye over virtually everything he has written, because we can hear a thousand views about him - favourable and unfavourable, it is hard now to imagine a Beckett whom publishers ignored, who was known to a mere handful of people, and who already sensed the directions of his life's work. But it was this unknown Beckett, not the Nobel laureate, who claimed, in the nearest he is ever likely to come to a statement about his own art, "nothing to express, nothing with which to express, no power to express, no desire to express, together with the obligation to express". It was still earlier Beckett whose first-person narrator concluded a story (itself called "The End") with the words "without the courage to end or the strength to go on." The language, you might say, of a dispirited old man. There are many more examples from the time before *Godot* and fame, but nothing changed when fame arrived. The numberless figures whom some, extrapolating from the text, have labelled "tramp", "human wreck" or just "old man" have gathered round their otherwise silent creator and screened him, conferring on him "their" plights and purposes, life and imminent or actual death. So the man who reveals nothing is there for all to read - like an open book. In a final stroke, great age as a defining characteristic passes back again to the personae, whether they are waiting for the end or engaged in foetal struggles.

The defence is complete. The explicit hopelessness of physical and affective cripples, the pervasive refusal and disgust, the identifying of language as both fatal flaw and torture: whatever else these have done, they have combined to conceal the relation of Beckett to his own words; and so have allowed him to pursue undisturbed whatever most matters to him. Indeed, if it weren't for two things, we would find it hard to do more than guess at the existence of some of the screening mechanism. But they are big things: the unremittingness of emphasis (pain and death centred in age) and the matchless variety, vitality of the writing. The second disposes summarily of the myth of Beckett as senile prophet of doom, the first continually confirms the usefulness of that myth for him. But, singly or together, they do not allow any breaching of the defence.

Here of course we must be careful. The private concerns of this or any other writer are just that, and none of

our business. Yet a nagging worry remains, fed by the very consistency of the defence: why the insistence on age? There is partial answer in the recognition that old age provides unquestionable justification for every kind of split: of memory from desire, of past from present, of self from other, of here from there. But there is another slip back into early response. This is the permanent other side of what is known as the realized "I", and only from here can Beckett write. Now there is no difficulty in accommodating the presence in the text of formidable brilliance, the crying of the lost infant and the obsessional repetitions of the adult; for they are never part of a settled hierarchy. All is possible or impossible. And, as the real years go by, the part-selves gather more and more round the ground of earliest experience, like the twelve watchers of *III Seen III Said*. For his readers there will be, inevitably and properly, only glimpses, and then only of fragments, but they are important. The fascinated and unappalled attention to the solitary woman, hated and unforgettable, catches up a moment from *A Piece of Monologue* (in *Three Occasional Pieces*): "Coffin on its way. Loved one ... he all but said loved one on his way. Her way ... Trying to treat of other matters. Till half hears there are no other matters. Never were other matters. ... Never but the one matter."

For us there is other matter: what quotation cannot reveal is the consistent vigour and inventiveness of Beckett's prose, which eludes attempts to pin him down to this or that preoccupation. Perhaps, as they used to say about dreams, contraries are the best guides, and this is as true of *III Seen III Said* as it is of *More Pricks than Kicks*.

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commentary

A martyrdom concealed

Frank Williams

The Colour of Pomegranates
ICA Cinema

It is difficult to conceive of a dissident film. A writer can challenge the régime with relative ease, launching his ideas into the world by means of *samizdat* or the ever more popular *jamizdat*, publishing abroad. But the film-maker is trapped in an elaborate industry, closely watched by the Party which constantly repeats Lenin's dictum that the cinema is "the most important art". In a country that still looks to the cinema for its entertainment, the film-maker has a key ideological role to play. Yet Sergio Paradjanov's film *The Colour of Pomegranates* succeeds in defying official norms and taboos.

It says something about the complexities of the cultural process during the early years of Brezhnev's rule that Paradjanov made his film at all (in the Armenian state studios), and that it was also shown in the first in Armenia after it was completed in 1969, then briefly, after extensive re-editing, in Russia proper during 1973. For Moscow cinephiles the showing of *The Colour of Pomegranates* was a major event; nothing like it had been seen before and everyone was talking about it. Paradjanov's arrest the following year on a charge of homosexuality, still a serious crime in the Soviet Union, came as a shock. His film vanished from Soviet screens and his name was expunged from the ranks of Soviet film-makers. Not that he is forgotten; only last year his fellow-director Andrey Tarkovsky named him as one of the most important contemporary Soviet directors.

Tarkovsky and Paradjanov belong to the same generation, the Soviet "new wave" that in the early 1960s brought cinema out of its Stalinist Ice Age, introducing new themes, reviving experiment and, in the Republics, re-kindling national awareness. Paradjanov, an Armenian born in Georgia, had trained in Moscow and then gone to work for the Dovzhenko studios in Kiev. On his own admission, his first films there were standard Soviet products, but in 1964 he broke new ground with *Shadows of Our Forgotten Ancestors*, a hauntingly poetic portrait of the life and traditions of the Huruk, a Western Ukrainian mountain people. As a celebration of purely national values it had no precedent. The authorities were taken aback, particularly when the film won sixteen prizes abroad. International acclaim has subsequently become an important means for "difficult" film-makers to retain a toe-hold in the Soviet industry. Paradjanov, however, was offered no projects for another five years, until Armenfilm, looking for directors who could match the increasingly successful Georgians, invited him to work for them. The result was *The Colour of Pomegranates*.

The film is based on the life of Armenia's national poet Sayat-Nova, the King of Song, whose real name was Arutyun Sayat-Nova. An eighteenth-century Caucasian equivalent of the troubadours, Sayat-Nova was born of humble Armenian parents in the Georgian capital, Tbilisi. As a boy he was trained as a carpet weaver, but his precocious skills as a poet caught the ear of King Herakle II, who summoned him to court. There Sayat-Nova had the misfortune to fall in love with the king's sister. He was banished to a monastery, only to rise through the hierarchy to become Archbishop. In 1795, at the age of eighty-three, he died a martyr, hanged to death on the steps of the Cathedral by Persian invaders after he refused to renounce Christianity.

Paradjanov's treatment of the story is as stylized and as delicate as Sayat-Nova's poems of courtly love, and he uses the poet's words and music to replace conventional dialogue. In an early scene, the young poet is undergoing instruction from the monks as he turns, fascinated, the pages of

an illuminated manuscript. The film itself is reminiscent of an unfolding illuminated scroll or fresco. Static image follows static image, tracing Sayat-Nova's progress through the rituals of labour, court life, courtship and religious ceremony. Like the icon, *The Colour of Pomegranates* relies on an elaborate symbolism for its poetry and meaning. Every shot has its particular significance, though the precise meaning often remains obscure. Sayat-Nova's own description of his writings —

My water's of a special kind,
Not everyone can drink it;
My writing's of a special kind,
Not everyone can read it
refers equally well to Paradjanov's film.

The Colour of Pomegranates clearly aroused deep misgivings in the Soviet cultural Establishment. The doyen of Soviet cinema, Sergey Yutkevich, was entrusted with the task of producing an acceptable, re-edited version. It must have been difficult for him. On the one hand he was faced by a work that was in the best traditions of the experimental cinema that he himself had helped to create in the 1920s, a work by a director who had thoroughly mastered the lessons of Eisenstein, Pudovkin and Dovzhenko. On the other hand, as the maker of hagiographical films about Lenin, Yutkevich must have been appalled by the contents of what he saw. He cut twenty minutes from the film.

While it is impossible to say precisely what effect Yutkevich had on the structure and content of *The Colour of Pomegranates*, he could not entirely sanitize it ideologically, nor alter Paradjanov's basic intention. Paradjanov created a portrait of Sayat-Nova that is recognizably truthful to Armenians, as opposed to the official version, which presents the poet as a "progressive" and also as a truculent cleric. According to the *Soviet Literary Encyclopedia*, he never reconciled himself to monastic life. . . S-N's world view is free of the influence of Christian morality. . . In contrast to medieval religious dogma, S-N's philosophy of life is optimistic. Paradjanov's Sayat-Nova is no milk-and-water Christian, but he is certainly not in conflict with the religious life and pays the supreme sacrifice for his faith. According to an Armenian colleague, seeing the film creates a feeling of intense pride in the

Armenians' ability to survive as a nation and retain their Christian culture despite catastrophe and oppression. There are specific images that are highly charged — blood-red juice spilling from a cut pomegranate onto a cloth and forming a stain in the shape of the boundaries of the ancient Kingdom of Armenia; dyers lifting hanks of wool out of vats in the colours of the national flag, and so on.

Symbolism of this sort would be as obscure to Russians as to anybody living outside the Soviet Union. But one other aspect of the film surely made as big an impact on Russians as on Armenians: as opposed to the official version, which presents the image of the church as a unifying force, not only does Paradjanov represent the church as the centre of resistance to alien imposition, he also shows monastic existence as an ideal society, harmoniously combining dignified manual labour and a richly contemplative life.

At some point somebody in the hierarchy decided that things had gone too far and an example had to be made of Paradjanov, who had compounded his sins by speaking out in the defence of Ukrainian intellectuals, and he was arrested on a charge of homosexuality, which was clearly a pretext. In 1980, having served a five-year sentence, he was released. He settled with relatives in Tbilisi, requesting work in the cinema or the theatre. He was refused. He applied for permission to go abroad. He was refused. In February this year there came reports that he had been arrested once more, apparently for giving an outspoken interview to foreigners. The international campaign on behalf of Paradjanov, led by Professor Herbert Marshall, has had to begin all over again.

It is due to Professor Marshall's efforts that *The Colour of Pomegranates* is available at all for showing in this country (it was never given an export licence), and it is no fault of his that the print showing at the ICA is a wretched shadow of the original. It is a duplicate of a duplicate made from a smuggled 16mm copy that has not only passed through Yutkevich's hands but through those of the Shah's censors as well, so that the crucial scenes of Sayat-Nova's martyrdom are missing. The colour is badly faded, and the quality of the sound track has suffered. *The Colour of Pomegranates* survives even these handicaps magnificently.

Voices from the wreckage

Alex Martin

ROBYN ARCHER and RODNEY FISHER

A Star is Torn
Wyndham's Theatre

The entertainment industry is notorious for the human wreckage it creates. Setting aside the sad legions of "losers" who never achieve recognition, there is still a disturbing number of "winners" who are cruelly cast aside when fashions change (Buster Keaton), crushed by drugs, depression or booze (Billie Holiday), murdered (John Lennon), or scythed down in their prime by crashes in planes and cars (Glenn Miller, Bessie Smith).

In a contentious programme note Rodney Fisher, director and co-author of *A Star is Torn*, claims that, in the world of popular song at least, early death has hit women more frequently and viciously than men. This is nonsense — though forgivable nonsense since it has provided him with an excuse for a fine musical rant at the price of fame.

A Star is Torn has recently transferred to the West End after success at the Theatre Royal, Stratford. One can see why. It is a cleverly assembled, brilliantly realized anthology of popular songs sung by the versatile Robyn Archer in the style of

eleven great female singers of this century, from Marie Lloyd to Janis Joplin. As well as the songs, we are given some sharp, slickly inserted biographical notes telling us plainly that these women were pitilessly dealt with by fate, society and their men. Between them they had twenty-eight husbands and God knows how many broken hearts, but only four children (three of them Judy Garland's). Billie Holiday was raped at the age of ten and arrested for prostitution at fourteen. Bessie Smith, mangled and dying after a car crash, was refused admission to a hospital because she was black. Both Judy Garland and Edith Piaf weighed less than five stone when they died. . .

Despite the horrors, it is not at all a depressing evening — much more a celebration than an indictment. It is also an impressive display of vocal technique. Eleven very different voices are reproduced with the inherent impossibility of the task — remarkable accuracy, not only as to tone, dynamics and phrasing, but, far more importantly, as to the vital force of attack that must have made listening to Piaf, for instance, or in a more muted but no less intense way Billie Holiday, such a powerful experience.

All of this, however, would be only mildly interesting without the warmth and generosity of Robyn Archer as she works through this grueling act. She is not a glamorous creature, with her athletic shoulders, big eyes, and certain, quiet, striking facial

Dramatists on stage

John Hope Mason

M. A. BULGAKOV

Molière
The Other Place, Stratford-upon-Avon

Playwrights stand alone. Their works need theatres, but in those theatres they remain intruders, outsiders. Managers, actors and, most of all, directors have their own ideas of what the play really is or should be. The playwright's comments about his play are usually regarded with a cool politeness, an impatient scepticism, or an open hostility. He seems to have been invited in like some friend of an overseas relative, for whom the forms of hospitality hold but never the substance, and the sooner he is gone the happier everyone else will be. Such is his position in good times, in a free country.

Bulgakov loved the theatre, but he also wrote plays. His first major play, the stage adaptation of *The White Guard*, achieved the double distinction of causing a critical uproar and being a popular success. What more could a playwright want? Obviously, he could hope to see his play performed as he had written it. But the theatre had insisted on its ideas, and the Soviet Union was not a free country. The experience of these constraints led Bulgakov to write *The Crimson Island*, a hilarious satire of the theatre, propaganda plays, and censorship. It was staged, but not for long. Soon after its opening, in 1929, official disapproval ended both its run and that of *Days of the Turbins* (the stage version of *The White Guard*); and his new play, *Flight*, was also banned.

Bulgakov's response to this complete suppression of his work was to write another play, *Molière*. Taking certain facts of Molière's life, and altering others, he showed how the man's career was destroyed by powerful enemies, in particular the Catholic Church. The Archbishop of Paris persuaded Louis XIV to ban Molière's company, and he withdrew his patronage of Molière's company; he also turns other influential people against the playwright. This narrative is historically false — Louis supported Molière against the Church, and Molière did not die as enemies were

closing in on him from all sides — but is dramatically vivid. Bulgakov's imagination conjures up a typically idiosyncratic but entirely convincing picture of Molière's world. He delves in the interplay of serious events and quirky details, of chaos, absurdity, and steely purposefulness. The play is a turns touching and amusing, rich in brilliant contrasts — the shabbiness of the theatre and the theatrical splendours of the Court, the innocent deceptions of entertainers and the lethal deceits of real life, Molière the brilliant actor and Molière the quarrelsome, stuttering man of letters. Through it all runs the belief that whatever happens the writer must go on writing, the performer performing.

This RSC *Molière* is an excellent and, in the main, faithful staging of Bulgakov's play. Bill Alexander's production does not fully sustain the momentum of the first act, so backstage during *Le Cocu Imaginaire*, and it does not realize all the atmosphere of other scenes, such as that set in the cathedral. But it is both ingenious and visually striking (the designs are by Ralph Koltai), and it conveys a strong sense of the world Bulgakov depicted. The cast are good, and Derek Godfrey as Louis XIV is outstanding. David Bradley's Archbishop needs a more incisive edge and Anthony Sher's Molière needs more resources in the final scene, so backstage during the final performance of *Le Malade Imaginaire*; but these are minor faults in an otherwise satisfying performance.

There is, however, one false note. In the prologue and the programme it is suggested that Bulgakov saw a very close identification between Louis XIV and Stalin, and the delays in the production of the play (it was not performed till 1936) were solely due to official disavowal. This is a drastic and erroneous oversimplification. The programme note also states that "there was a radical flame which burned in all Bulgakov's work", which is nonsense.

Bulgakov's feeling about Stalin when he wrote *Molière* may have been hostile but after 1930 he had every reason to be grateful to him. Because of Stalin he was given a job at the Moscow Arts Theatre, which was revived in 1932 and *Turbins* was revived in the repertoire, reputedly as Stalin's favourite play. It has been suggested that Bulgakov's survival through the rest of the grim 1930s was due to Stalin's protection. This would explain his willingness in 1939 to write a play about Stalin's youth.

Furthermore, while there may have been official disapproval of *Molière*, a prime reason for the delay in the production was the fact that the Stanislavsky did not like the way Molière was portrayed; he wanted a romantic picture of a genius at work, precisely the opposite of what Bulgakov had written. Censorship was the only enemies of playwrights; these are also directors, and it is simple-minded to suppose that all Bulgakov's troubles came from outside the theatre. The evidence is presented in the bitterly funny account he wrote of his dealings with the Moscow Arts Theatre, his *Theatrical Novel* (also known as *Black Snow*).

This mistaken emphasis is confined to the opening and the programme note; otherwise the play is close to Bulgakov's text and we therefore can enjoy the play Bulgakov wrote. Like all his work it combines brilliant moments of humour with a profound sense of enduring values. The result is one of the most convincing portraits of an artist that has been written for the stage. It is a portrait of an extraordinary man with an extraordinary talent, who is not exempt from any fault because of that talent, and who therefore expect no special recognition or rewards in his pursuit of his art. It is the penultimate word on the home to his painfully achieved position by an abiding fear of being left out of the time, spoil a very remarkable performance.

"I don't think anybody has written about Stockton", mused the Registrar of Public Lending Right as he drove through post-industrial Stockton-on-Tees to his modest offices in a grey block shared, perhaps symbolically, with an oil-rig design firm, the tax office, the dole office and the Official Receiver in Bankruptcy. If any living author resident in Britain has published a Stockton novel, he would be well advised to get in touch with the Registrar, for from September 1 he will be able to register it for PLR. September 1 marks the end of a thirty-year battle to secure some compensation to writers for the use of their books in public libraries: it opens a new era full of imponderables for writers, publishers and librarians.

The Registrar, John Sumson, does not claim to be a literary man. His interests are mainly musical, and he was a senior executive in a shoe company before taking up his appointment a year ago. He has had to learn quickly about the complexities of bibliography and statistics, and also about the conflict of interests in the literary world. He was surprised by the bitterness of feeling between many authors and publishers, and acknowledges that some librarians have only accepted the scheme because they are "punch drunk" after ten years of resisting it. Bitterness between publishers and the writers' organizations is likely to remain, so long as publishers continue to claim that they have a right to a proportion of their authors' PLR earnings. (The debate which began in these columns has gone as far as a question in the House to the Minister for the Arts; Mr Channon's answer failed to clarify the matter.) The Registrar avoided making any comment on the publishers' claim, except to say that his job would be easier technically if publishers had been included in the scheme.

Although organized on Civil Service lines, the office for Public Lending Right is a new quango, and the Registrar turns out to have considerable power, as well as responsibility. He has the Public Lending Right Act 1979 to interpret, and he is the final decision on the eligibility of a book for lending right money. He has set up a small advisory committee of representatives from the librarians, writers and publishers, but there is no appeal against his rulings, except to go to common law.

For most authors and most books such an event is unlikely. Provided the author is alive, a British or EEC citizen, and resident in the United Kingdom, registration is not difficult. But Mr Sumson's judgment of Solomon may be required where more than one author is involved, or where — as with children's books — the illustrations are a significant part of the work. If there are more than three authors involved, the work becomes ineligible. If one co-author is dead, likewise. If the collaborators cannot agree on the proportion of their contribution, the book will not be registered. There are nagging regulations concerning the relation of printed text to illustration. Mr Sumson is also exercised by books about contemporary artists which reproduce large quantities of their work. Should the artist, though not an illustrator, get a cut? These questions Mr Sumson will have to decide for himself, and he can call for a copy of the book at issue if necessary. Public Lending Right is a new property right (and as such can be assigned to someone else, left in one's will, or attached for bankruptcy). It is not the same as copyright, and where there is a vacuum in the law, Mr Sumson will have to fill it.

The major unknown in the PLR scheme at present, however, is the number of people who will apply to benefit from it. Estimates vary from 10,000 to 125,000. The Registrar is working on the assumption that 50,000 will apply, but there is still the question of when these applications will come in. To qualify for the first payment, due in February 1984, applications can be made between September 1 and June 30 next year. A sudden bulge of applicants next June (though the first year's work is bound to be unusual) could overwhelm the Registrar's

Behind the lines

Robert Hewison

present staff of fifteen and push up administration costs unacceptably. Ironically, the more successful the writers' organizations are in persuading people to claim their rights, the less money there will be for each writer since the sum to be divided (£2 million, less between £400,000 and £600,000 administration costs) is already fixed.

One major discouragement is the form of registration itself. Authors do not simply register the titles of their books, they must register every separate edition, and give its ISBN number. Authors are not always able to give information in such detail (as a number of early applications have shown) and few books published before 1970 have ISBN numbers. To this end the Registrar is having to create his own numbers for as many as fifteen per cent of the books held in the sixteen public libraries on whose borrowings the loan sample is based. To authors he is being as helpful as possible, by cross-checking their applications against the best cataloguing systems available. He will even, for a small fee, send you a print-out of your bibliography. John Sumson however points out that this kind-heartedness is not disinterested. "My prime concern is to operate PLR in the most economical way — which means operating it in such a way that there are no complaints." A more economical way would be to calculate PLR by title rather than edition, but so far neither the Registrar nor the writers' organizations have managed to persuade the Minister for the Arts that this would be so.

It is only after June 30, 1983, when the 10,000 or 50,000 authors have resolved the existential question of their true selves and declared the outcome to a Commissioner of Oaths (fee £2) in order to register their writing names, that we shall know exactly how much will be due to an author each time a book is borrowed. The 6,000,000 borrowings in the sample libraries will have to be statistically balanced and grossed up to produce a national figure. It will be impossible to earn more than £5,000 (per author) or less than £5 (per edition). John Sumson reckons that the figure will be more than the 0.5p mentioned in the Act, but less than a penny. The final calculation, on a computer the size of four filing cabinets, will take between eight and twelve hours, but the complications of establishing a new system mean that it will still be a rush to have the money paid by February 1984.

And will PLR change anything? It is a twist of fate that just as PLR comes to the aid of the struggling novelist whose only income has been from sales to free-lending libraries, public expenditure cuts are reducing library budgets. Computer science has made it possible to end a natural inactivity, and John Sumson hopes that the conflicting interests of author, publisher and librarian will become more reconciled. PLR will have its effect on library systems, and will also make available for the first time a mass of information on the borrowing and reading habits of the British public. Mr Sumson points out that "PLR will reward writers of books rather than writers of literature". No author will be much richer for PLR. The important thing is that some will be less poor.

One of the astonishing aspects of the PLR story has been the refusal of the civil servants charged with devising the scheme to acknowledge that anything could be learnt from those countries that have Public Lending Right in operation already. There were contacts with Australia, but Scandinavia — Denmark introduced PLR in 1948 — and West Germany were ignored.

The Swedish system, in operation since 1954, has features which would make the Arts Council of Great Britain's Literature Department redundant altogether. PLR is paid (unlike here) on reference books and translations, as well as on original works, but a proportion of the loan fee, about 25p, is paid into a fund which provides a sophisticated system of support for Swedish literature. Short

and long term grants leading to pensions are made to writers from the fund. It is fully accepted that PLR ought to supply professional writers with a basic income, and arrangements have been made to guarantee the livelihood of worthy, but less borrowed, authors who do not earn sufficient from the PLR. Some 160 authors, translators and illustrators are supported in this way, and they too can look forward to a pension. It makes the Royal Literary Fund seem an antiquated form of patronage.

Swedish PLR is administered by a board on which writers are heavily represented, but their organizations have had their battles gradually to raise the sum paid per loan. In 1969, dissatisfied with a government offer, they took direct action. Since a Swedish library ticket allows any number of books to be borrowed, on a single day in April authors descended on the principal libraries of Stockholm, Malmö, Gothenburg and Umeå and carried off all the Swedish books. In Stockholm 600 people used five library tickets to take 1,500 volumes away in furniture vans. The trick worked.

Mass borrowings and the occupation of libraries were considered by British writers in their campaign for PLR, but in the end only one demonstration, on a traffic island in Belgrave Square, outside the Ministry of Arts, took place on St George's day, 1975.

The long siege of the institutions began in 1951, when John Brophy began his campaign for what became known as "Brophy's Penny". His first struggle was to convince the Society of Authors of the worthiness of his cause. Later it was taken up by the veteran literary campaigner Sir Alan Herbert, during his Chairmanship of the Society, but his brusque manner alienated many librarians. Woodrow Wyatt and Michael Holroyd are among those who kept prodding successive governments during the 1960s, but the campaign began in earnest in 1972 when Bridget Brophy formed the Writers' Action Group with Leticia Cooper, Maureen Duffy, Francis King and Michael Levey.

The history of WAG should be written one day, and Bridget Brophy says she may write it. Its ten years of existence had a bracing effect on the British literary climate, and on the self-confidence of authors. Its most direct effect was to toughen the attitudes of the Society of Authors and the Writers' Guild, which only decided to accept book writers as members after WAG persuaded them to. The PLR campaign shows that it is possible for a small pressure group with a single aim to win through, provided it is both articulate and tenacious. In the British cultural climate writers have to be so to survive.

Enquiries about PLR should be sent to: The Registrar of Public Lending Right, Bayheath House, Princes Regent Street, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland TS18 1DE. Enquiries about the Authors' Lending and Copyright Society should be sent to: ALCS, 430 Edgware Road, London W2 1EH.

Fifty years on: Almqvist's crimes

The TLS of August 25, 1932 carried the following review of A Poet's Tragedy, The Trial of C. J. L. Almqvist by A. Henning-Sjöberg:

In the year 1851 Sweden was shocked by rumours of serious crimes said to have been committed by one of its leading literary figures, Carl Louis Almqvist.

Apart from the literary distinction of the accused, the case, though a sordid one, presents some interesting features. The sufferer by the robbery and intended victim, Captain von Scheven, was a figure of such picturesque originality as is rarely to be met with in real life: a dirty old reclusive and miser with inexplicable soft places in his heart, who managed to acquire an unenviable reputation as a moneylender, though this was the calling of all others which he least fitted (temporarily) to pursue with profit. Having entrusted to Almqvist the collection of a debt now about 25p, he paid into a fund which provides a sophisticated system of support for Swedish literature. Short

projected scheme for a royalty on the quantities of material pirated daily by photo-copying in schools and universities.

The ALCS's principal function at present is to distribute money due to British writers from PLR in West Germany. But the reluctance of writers to fill in forms is fully demonstrated by the ALCS's low membership — currently 1,100. Yet the ALCS is holding sums of money for authors well in excess of the £2 it costs to join. Money has been accumulating since 1973, and so far British authors have benefited to the tune of £80,000, with further sums due shortly.

Arrangements with West Germany will be one of the first areas of contention now that PLR has been established. The British scheme makes no allowance for reciprocity with other countries, and the West Germans have protested strongly about paying out money and getting nothing in return. Since the cash flow is likely to be in Britain's favour, it is to be hoped that the Registrar can sort out the technical difficulties, and overcome our cultural chauvinism. The other battle will be to raise Britain's PLR allocation from the present £2 million. It may be that occupations and mass borrowings are not just a threat from the past.

3,000 book buyers for public libraries are high on the list of targets for the Book Marketing Council's 1983 promotion: The Best Young British Novelists. Officially there are only twenty of these, all below the age of forty, picked from an entry of seventy. While some names could be predicted (make your own list before reading out) some are hardly known at all, and have not yet made the commercial grade of a publication in paperback. All that will now change: promises Book Marketing Council director Desmond Clarke. Public library support is being watched by the promise of major displays in W. H. Smith's and elsewhere. Large orders placed by such firms will mean that books will be distributed to branches where, as far as I can understand, books have never been seen before.

The selectors were Martin Goff of the National Book League, Beryl Bainbridge, Michael Holroyd, and Alison Rimmer of Heffer's bookshop and the *Fiction Magazine*. The lucky twenty are: Martin Amis, Pat Barker, Julian Barnes, Ursula Bentley, William Boyd, Buchi Emeketa, Maggie Gee, Kazuo Ishiguro, Alan Judd, Adam Mars-Jones, Ian McEwan, Shiva Nigam, Philip Norman, Christopher Priest, Salman Rushdie, Lisa St Aubin de Terán, Clive Sinclair, Graham Swift, Rose Tremain, A. N. Wilson.

Enquiries about PLR should be sent to: The Registrar of Public Lending Right, Bayheath House, Princes Regent Street, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland TS18 1DE. Enquiries about the Authors' Lending and Copyright Society should be sent to: ALCS, 430 Edgware Road, London W2 1EH.

Fifty years on: Almqvist's crimes

poet to retain the sum in exchange for promissory notes. These documents Almqvist proceeded to steal; and, on the discovery of the theft, responsibility for which he tried to impute to others, he substituted other notes with a false signature, trusting to the failing sight of the captain to prevent discovery of the fraud. As a final, but, as Mr Sjöberg shows, ultimately essential, part of his plan, he then repeatedly attempted to poison his defrauded creditor with arsenic. When discovery threatened, he fled to America, where he lived safely until the year before his death, adding the crime of bigamy to his other offences. As will be seen, the main plot was one of remarkable meanness, but psychologists will be interested in two points. One is the criminal's fatal but ineradicable habit of drafting written memoranda for his defence against such charges as he foresaw, calling of all others which he least fitted (temporarily) to pursue with profit. Having entrusted to Almqvist the collection of a debt now about 25p, he paid into a fund which provides a sophisticated system of support for Swedish literature. Short

New Oxford books: History

Spain 1808-1975

Raymond Carr

Since Raymond Carr's *Spain* was first published in 1966 there has been a revolution in Spanish historiography. The more modern history of Spain, a neglected, even dangerous field, virtually unexplored, has since come into its own. In this new edition the author has added new chapters that examine Francoism, its political system, and the society it sustained. "A monumental work . . . overwhelmingly impressive" said the *New Statesman* of the first edition. Second edition £19.50 paperback £9.95 Oxford History of Modern Europe 2 September

French War Aims against Germany 1914-1919

D. Stevenson

This book examines French foreign policy during the First World War, and the peace conditions which French Governments intended to impose on Germany in the event of a victory. The author concludes that the sentimental and economic motives for French policy were less important than the strategic concern of so reducing Germany's independence as to make a renewed invasion of France impossible. £19.50

Karamanlis

The Restorer of Greek Democracy
C. M. Woodhouse

The emergence of Greece from a Balkan backwater into the status of a truly European country was largely the personal achievement of Karamanlis, Greece's greatest statesman since Venizelos. Karamanlis achieved even more than Venizelos, whose achievement was entirely personal: Karamanlis put Greece itself on the map. This is the first study of Karamanlis in English, and the first based on his personal archives. Illustrated £19.50 9 September

Charles Babbage

Pioneer of the Modern Computer
Anthony Hyman

In nineteenth-century London Charles Babbage was known as a leading social figure, philosopher, militant reformer, and pioneer of industrial science. His interests were extremely wide, but his abiding concern was with his 'Engines', which finally included many of the features of the modern computer. Today he is remembered as the great pioneer of computing. Illustrated £12.50

The Dillen

Memories of a Man of Stratford-upon-Avon
Edited by Angela Hewins

'A Warwickshire Decameron'. *New Society*. It is funny and heart-breaking by turns, packed with incidents and anecdotals. *Sunday Times*. Illustrated £2.95 Oxford Paperbacks

Oxford University Press

John Co 1367

to the editor

Arts Council
Policy

Sir, - In her searching, if somewhat hollower-than-thou, review (August 13), Marghanita Laski seems too preoccupied with the possible contents of the book that I didn't write ("The Uses of the Arts") to summarize at all accurately the contents of my book.

In *The Politics of the Arts Council* I do not follow "the now common practice of assigning the Council's literature Director for having said that the Council supported too much mediocre art", nor do I express any demand "for not judging high art harshly". Quite the reverse; I say in the book that the Arts Council's concern with artistic standards is neither rigorous nor systematic enough.

Nor do I suggest that the Arts Council should "get on with evolving a bit of soundly-based theory"; rather it is a bit of soundly-based policy that I would like to see clearly articulated.

Marghanita Laski tells us that criticism is more useful than praise and that the Arts Council draws on the most skilled advice available. If both these points are true it is bizarre that such skilled advice should be withheld from unsuccessful grant applicants who seek reasons for the judgments made on their work. The failure to explain its decision and to share the skilled advice that it receives are part of the explanation why the Arts Council has been lacking the authority and credibility that befit its status.

"One of the things his book shows is how very responsive to criticism the Arts Council is," says Marghanita Laski. The opposite of that statement is equally true. Although the Council has widened the range of its patronage as its grant-in-aid has risen, the weaknesses in its structure, assumptions and *modus operandi* remain roughly what they were thirty years ago. So do the strengths.

ROBERT HUTCHISON,
77 Dresden Road, London N19.

George Eliot

Sir, - Two points arise from John Bayley's review (July 23) of *Particularities: Readings in George Eliot* by Barbara Hardy, and *George Eliot: A Centenary Tribute* edited by Gordon S. Haight and Rosemary T. Vanardel. He writes: "Ladislav may well

be unfaithful to [Dorothea] as Lewis was to George Eliot herself". It is not clear whether this statement of Lewis's infidelity is John Bayley's or Barbara Hardy's, but it appears in the review as a statement of fact. It would be interesting to know on what factual evidence this is made.

In the review of the essay, "George Eliot's Bastards", in the second book, he writes that George Eliot was well aware of Charles Bray's "two illegitimate daughters, who were looked after and indeed cherished by his childless wife". In my book *Those of Us Who Loved Her: The Men in George Eliot's Life* (published by the George Eliot Fellowship as their contribution to the centenary year), I pointed out that only Bray's eldest daughter, Elmor Mary (known as Nelly), was adopted (albeit unofficially) and cared for by Charles and Caroline Bray. I suggest that the "other" daughter in the Bray household was, in fact, the same child on another occasion. Charles Bray had six illegitimate children by his mistress, Hannah Steane (later known as Mrs Gray). Hannah kept the other five with her, financially assisted, no doubt, by the children's father, Bray. The only other daughter, apart from Nelly, was Annie, born when the elder girl was five or six.

It has been suggested that Caroline Bray encouraged her husband to take a mistress and to have a child, since she could not bear children. One wonders why the "need" extended to six children and whether George Eliot, well aware of Nelly, was also aware of the child's sister and four brothers!

KATHLEEN ADAMS,
The George Eliot Fellowship, 71 Stepping Stones Road, Coventry.

'From Locke to
Saussure'

Sir, - In her review (July 9) of my recent volume *From Locke to Saussure* Rebecca Posner remarks that Bréal's and Taine's relation to Saussure will come as no surprise to readers of the *Jordan-Ort Introduction to Romance Linguistics* (1937), referring to a footnote there on p. 294. I do not see that Taine appears anywhere in that book, and I am at a

loss to comprehend how it could be thought I was merely repeating something Romanists already knew about Bréal and Saussure. That I knew they have been related appears amply in my quotations. Except for one item (from which I also cite), the forty-five-year-old note is based on a seventy-six-year-old book that was published before many of the relevant primary texts. I deal with every one of the note's few primary texts among the dozens I use.

The note makes the most of Arsène Darmesteter's *La Vie des mots*, but the Saussurean ideas attributed to it were earlier advanced by Bréal (who was Darmesteter's teacher). Its basic method and conception of the nature of language were rejected by Bréal, Saussure and Gaston Paris (a Romanist if there ever was one). Paris wrote a very critical thirty-page review, which I cite, and in it Paris cited Bréal and his own indebtedness to him on the main point at issue. Bréal's *Essai de sémantique* is cited several times in *Jordan-Ort*, but without any awareness that it is largely a collection of texts Bréal had begun to publish more than thirty years before it appeared in 1897. That alone totally alters the history Posner thinks *Jordan-Ort* took care of so well forty-five years ago that no surprises could be left. These seemed to me sufficient reasons not to refer to *Jordan-Ort*, which I have known all along. Posner surmises that my omission stems from the fact that I am, as she says, an Anglicist and not a Romanist. If so it is odd that I can elsewhere in the volume cite two of today's most prominent Romanists who have written on Saussure's background without any mention of *Jordan-Ort* and coming to altogether different conclusions, one of them being so bizarre on Bréal that I forbore mention. Posner illustrates the specialist's faith in text-book preface history, no matter how old and poorly informed.

Posner makes much of "scientific" linguistics and of my paying scant attention to it. For her, this studies language as "rule-governed activity, almost as if it were a self-propelling mechanism". I happen to be more interested in how the study that finds such self-propelling mechanisms gets started, in intellectual history. The trouble with scientificism is that there are far too many versions of it and little agreement on subject-matter, method and goal. Good science does not have quite those problems. But does it matter? I agree with Richard Rorty that what matters about philosophy is that the conversation goes on, not whether it is scientific or something of the sort. The same holds for the humanities at large. To lay claims to scientificism is of little interest, rather like whistling in the dark. What matters is that things should be interesting and intelligent. On these criteria there will

be little agreement, but there is no reason to believe that some specialist should have the privilege of deciding.
HANS AARSLEFF,
Department of English, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey 08544.

William Harvey

Sir, - In reviewing Gweneth Whittridge's new translation of Harvey's *Generation of Animals* (June 11) Martin Pollock is clearly more at home with the subtleties of DNA than with the subtleties of seventeenth-century medical thought. He has played rather fast and loose with the term "form", so central in the medical thinking of the era. Instead of asking why Harvey did not postulate "a substance with the biological properties of DNA", he might have expressed admiration that Harvey had come so close to doing exactly that.

It all boils down to the meaning of "form", which in seventeenth-century medicine was not mere configuration or shape but an explanatory concept of great power. Deriving originally from Aristotle the concept was elaborated over several centuries by physicians such as Fernel, Riverius, or Sennert. Many different philosophical senses became agglutinated into "form", often expanded as "substantial form". The form provided unique specificity; it was the locus of qualities; it contrasted with "matter" and, by definition, was immaterial; it represented activity and dynamism, concerned with development, generation, transformation, passage from the potential to the actual; it controlled organization and development; it was a real entity, although immaterial, and although indivisible, it was capable of multiplication.

These and other meanings are all implicit in the word "form" as used by seventeenth-century physicians who followed the Aristotelian tradition rather than the new chemical philosophy or the new atomism.

LESTER S. KING,
Department of History, University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois 60637.

'Perfect' Binding

Sir, - May I express my concern, both as a consumer and a librarian, at the increasing tendency of publishing houses to issue books in their first edition/impression in case-bound "perfect" (ie. sewn) format? One appreciates that, in order to keep prices within reasonable bounds, such permanent bindings may be regarded as a necessary evil - certainly there is little harm where subsequent impressions or reissues of novels and other works unlikely to receive heavy physical use are concerned. But the practice has spread to the point where a library, say,

buying a reference work destined inevitably to be grossly misused and supplied with a sub-standard binding, is likely to be written off as irreparable in an absurdly short time. For example, it was acceptable (if regrettable) that later impressions of the 4th edition of the Concise Oxford Dictionary should be "perfect-bound" but the new seventh edition?

Not wishing to be ungenerous, one must suppose this practice to have caused some soul-searching among quality publishers, but surely (given that sheets must be folded into gatherings before cropping) books could be issued simultaneously in a cheap "perfect" format and a more expensive sewn binding? After all, it has not proved impossible in the past to issue the same sheets as simultaneous hardback and paperback versions.

M. I. CHISHOLM,
19 Westfield Park, Redland, Bristol.

Evelyn Waugh's
Early Writings

Sir, - The recent Dalrymple Press prospectus describes Evelyn Waugh's P.R.B. (the 1926 edition of his books) as "the earliest and rarest of Waugh's books"; this is not correct. In our Catalogue 50 we listed, as item 190, "The World To Come A Poem In Three Cantos by E. A. St. J. Waugh. August 24th 1916". This edition was printed at the Westminster Press on hand-made paper and bound in blue cloth with white lettering on the upper cover. We reproduced the title-page in our catalogue largely to show the Greek epigraph from "Rev. xxi. 1". When Evelyn Waugh sold this book to me he wrote (January 27, 1961): "It is a deplorable work written when I was 12 in imitation of *The Dream of Gerontius*. It is nicely printed, as you can see, by Gerard Meynell. I don't know how many copies were printed - certainly not above a dozen I think."

GEORGE SIMS,
Peacocks, Hurst, Berkshire.

'La Naissance
du Purgatoire'

Sir, - Readers of R. W. Southern's review of *La Naissance du Purgatoire* by Jacques Le Goff (June 18) may be interested to know that an English translation will be published next year, by Scolar Press in England and by the University of Chicago Press in the United States.

JAMES PRICE,
Scolar Press, 90-91 Great Russell Street, London WC1.

"Author, Author" competition No 85, and the result of No 81, are on p 931 of this week's issue.

Among this week's contributors

JONATHAN BARNES is a Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford.

JOHN BAYLEY is Warton Professor of English at the University of Oxford. His *Shakespeare and Tragedy* was published in 1981.

ROBIN BRIGGS is a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

GEORGE CRAIG is a lecturer in French at the University of Sussex.

TIMOTHY D'ARCH SMITH is an antiquarian bookseller in London.

D. J. ENRIGHT is the editor of *The Oxford Book of Contemporary Verse*, 1980.

PATRICK LEIGH FERMOR's most recent book is *A Time of Gifts*, 1977.

RODERICK FLOUVE is Professor of Economic History at Birkbeck College, London.

ROY FULLER's collections of poems include *From the Joke Shop*, 1975, and *An Ill-Governed Coast*, 1976.

ANTHONY GIDDENS's books include *New Rules of Sociological Method*, 1976, and *Studies in Social and Political Theories*, 1977.

ROBERT HEWISON's *In Anger: Culture in the Cold War 1945-1960* was published last year.

ANTHONY HOLDEN's *The St Albans Poisoner: the Life and Crimes of Graham Young* was published in 1975.

GWYN JONES's books include *The Norse Atlantic Saga*, 1964, and *A History of the Vikings*, 1969.

KENNETH KITCHEN is Reader in Egyptian and Coptic at the University of Liverpool.

HILARY LAND is Reader in Social Administration at the University of Bristol.

JOHN HOPKINSON's *The Irresistible Diderot* was published earlier this year.

DAVID MATTHEWS is a composer and the author of *Michael Tippett: An Introductory Study*, 1980.

HAROLD MOORES is a specialist record-seller in London.

SAM C. NOLUTSHUNGU's *Changing South Africa* was published earlier this year.

D. W. PEARCE is Professor of Political Economy at the University of Aberdeen.

NICHOLAS RANKIN's stage adaptation of stories by J. L. Borges, *Armadillo*, was performed in 1980.

DAVID RIDGWAY is a lecturer in Archaeology at the University of Edinburgh.

JANIS ROBINSON is Wine Correspondent of the *Sunday Times*.

LARSEN ZIP is a Caroline Donnell Professor of English at Johns Hopkins University. His *Library of Theology* was published last year.

Preferences, pleasure and happiness

Peter Singer

AMARTYA SEN and BERNARD WILLIAMS (Editors)
Utilitarianism and Beyond
290pp. Cambridge University Press.
£20 (paperback, £7.50).
0 521 24296 7

Some ten years ago, Bernard Williams' "Critique of Utilitarianism" was published together with J. J. C. Smart's "Outline of a System of Utilitarianism" in a volume entitled *Utilitarianism For and Against*. The closing paragraph of Williams' essay went like this: "The important issues that utilitarianism raises should be discussed in contexts more rewarding than that of utilitarianism itself. The day cannot be too far off in which we hear no more of it."

Williams must have had second thoughts: together with Amartya Sen, Drummond Professor of Political Economy at Oxford, he has now produced a volume discussing the important issues that utilitarianism raises, in the context of utilitarianism. The volume shows that in philosophy and in welfare economics utilitarianism is alive and well.

This may seem a surprising conclusion to draw from a volume edited by two well-known opponents of the utilitarian view. Williams, in the essay just quoted and in subsequent writings, has placed particular stress on the idea that utilitarianism is incompatible with personal integrity. He is concerned that utilitarian obligations may force us to abandon our lifetime projects and commitments. A utilitarian biologist of pacifist inclinations might be unfortunate enough to find himself obliged to take a job in a germ warfare research establishment, lest the position go to someone more zealous who will develop horrific new pestilences. A botanist roaming the South American jungles might be put under an obligation to shoot an innocent person, if he should be so unlucky as to meet a brutal police chief who tells him that if he refuses to do the dirty deed, many more innocent people will be executed. And so on.

The idea is that there must be something wrong with a moral theory that would condemn us for deciding to mind our own business and get on with the legitimate projects and commitments that we have ourselves chosen.

Sen's objections to utilitarianism, developed in several journal articles that have appeared since his influential book, *Collective Choice and Social Welfare*, have focused on what is left out by any theory that aims single-mindedly at maximizing social welfare. Among the important things that are left out, according to Sen, are liberty and concern for the way in which welfare is distributed. In one oft-discussed example, he imagines a prudish person who does not fancy trading *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, and is even more strongly opposed to the book being read by those lessish people who would enjoy reading it. One such prudish person, on the other hand, while wishing to read the book himself, wishes even more strongly that the prudish would read it, since the prudish would, in his view, gain more by exposure to such a different view of life. If we leave all parties to themselves, of course, only the lewd will read the book, though if the book is to be read by only one person, both welfare would prefer - and thus a social welfare theory would regard as optimal - the situation in which only the prudish reads it. The result is, Sen maintains, a conflict between any social welfare theory, including utilitarianism, and any theory of rights which allows people to do as they choose.

So it is testimony to the fairness of its editors that this book is not especially loaded against utilitarianism. It consists of fourteen essays, plus the usual introductory survey by the editors.

Three papers give uncompromising support to utilitarianism: R. M. Hare's "Ethical theory and utilitarianism", John Harsanyi's "Morality and the theory of rational behaviour", and J. A. Mirrlees' "The economic uses of utilitarianism".

The essays by Hare and Harsanyi have been reprinted in what is otherwise a book of specially written essays, presumably because so much of what follows refers, explicitly or implicitly, to their work. Hare is the most prominent defender of utilitarianism today. "Ethical theory and utilitarianism" has now been superseded by the more thorough treatment he gives to the same subject in his recent book, *Moral Thinking*, but the essay is still the best short statement of Hare's version of utilitarianism. His version differs from the classical hedonistic form in that it aims at satisfying preferences, rather than maximizing pleasure or happiness. It is also a "two-level" version, neither act-utilitarianism nor rule-utilitarianism, but a more flexible approach which distinguishes between the "intuitive" moral thinking all practical people must engage in, and the "critical" level of the philosopher who has the luxury of enough time and detachment to ponder without presuppositions. Hare has put this distinction to good use in meeting some of the standard objections to utilitarianism, which rely on the intuitively repugnant results of critical utilitarian thought. On Hare's account this repugnance is neither surprising nor an objection to utilitarianism.

Harsanyi also defends a form of preference utilitarianism rather than the classical version. In this he is in keeping with welfare economics as a whole, for while economists find it difficult to cope with incommensurable mental states like pleasure or happiness, they think preferences can be measured by the theory of utility functions developed by von Neumann and Morgenstern in their *Theory of Games and Economic Behaviour*.

In setting up Hare and Harsanyi as the principal defenders of utilitarianism - a quite proper choice - Sen and Williams signal their view that classical Benthamite utilitarianism is no longer the leading version of the theory. This signal is strengthened by the fact that most of the essays critical of utilitarianism take some preference version as their target. If J. J. C. Smart had been included alongside Hare and Harsanyi the picture would have been a little different; nonetheless the book probably conveys an accurate indication of the current state of thought about utilitarianism.

After these three contributions by overt utilitarians, there are another four essays dealing with difficulties for utilitarianism, but in a manner which suggests that some form of utilitarianism can be retained. In this category I put Isaac Levi's defence of the theory against Sen's claim of incompatibility with individual liberty, and Partha Dasgupta's rebuttal of the related position taken by writers like Hayek who claim that any system of distributive justice must conflict with the rights of individuals to make their own decisions. Rather more qualified support for utilitarianism is given by Peter Hammond in his essay on the problems of uncertainty and incomplete information that face those who seek a utilitarian distribution of income and resources. The same is true of another discussion of uncertainty in utilitarian welfare economics, by Frank Hahn. Though Hahn finds plenty of difficulties for utilitarians, he concludes that they are difficulties we have to live with, and do not constitute

an argument for some other approach. (Why this should be so is a topic I shall come back to at the end of this review.)

The remaining eight essays are all gunning for utilitarianism. Some use a broad range of fire that they mow down much else besides. Frederic Schick, for instance, finds a problem for preference utilitarians in deciding under which descriptions the consequences of actions are to be judged. Were the consequences of the appeasement of Hitler the war which engulfed Europe? Under that description the policy was a disaster. Or were the consequences simply the collapse of the peace arranged at Versailles? Then they don't seem so bad. If this problem really is insoluble then preference utilitarians are in deep trouble. Schick goes on to point out, however, that they are not alone. In one form or other, his problem applies to theories of justice like that of Rawls, and to some forms of egoism; indeed, it applies to any theory that takes into account the values that people place either on the alternative outcomes they can choose, or on the choices themselves. In such good company, surely the utilitarian can find a way out of Schick's predicament?

Jon Elster, too, mounts an attack against a broad target; all theories that set as a goal some pattern of distribution, independently of the historical process by which it was reached. Elster needs history, he concludes, because wants and preferences cannot be taken at face value. They are formed by circumstances, and their ethical significance cannot be evaluated independently of those circumstances. Hence his title, "Sour grapes". If the fox thinks the grapes are sour, the utilitarian would normally count it as no loss if he doesn't get any - but of course the fabled fox only thinks the grapes are sour because he can't get any. This is what Elster calls "adaptive preference formation" and it is clearly something with which anyone concerned with satisfying preferences must contend. Can the problem be overcome by the requirement that the preferences to be considered be those of a person - or a fox - would have if fully informed? Maybe; but there are also problems here which, as Elster shows, need to be thought through.

Now we move on to anti-utilitarian statements that are more straightforwardly philosophical in character, and less concerned with the issues dealt with by welfare economics. Amy Gutman discusses the utilitarian approach to education, and contrasts it unfavourably with the way in which an advocate of liberty would approach the topic. The essay raises important issues, yet is a little out of place in a volume otherwise devoted to more basic issues.

The book includes essays by some of the leading philosophical opponents of utilitarianism. Readers familiar with the work of John Rawls, Stuart Hampshire and Charles Taylor will find few surprises in their contributions. Rawls offers an elaboration of his notion of primary goods which will be essential reading for those keen to keep up with the latest supplement to *A Theory of Justice*. I am not among this group, for I have never been satisfied with Rawls's arguments for the most crucial claim in all his work, that persons in the

"original position" would choose to do anything other than maximize their expected utility. This essay doesn't help. In trying to stress the difference between his own position and utilitarianism, Rawls writes: "In justice as fairness the members of society are conceived in the first instance as moral persons who can cooperate together for mutual advantage, and not simply as rational individuals who have aims and desires they seek to satisfy." But what exactly is this difference? What stops "rational individuals who have aims and desires they seek to satisfy" from cooperating for their mutual advantage? And why are such rational individuals not "moral persons"? I could find no answer.

Hampshire's writing is, as always, elegant; but in defending the value of convention against the consequentialist, whom he pictures as wishing to clear the decks of all custom and convention, he has surely fallen into the fallacy Bentham himself anticipated, when he wrote in his *Principles of Morals and Legislation* of those who try to combat the principle of utility with reasons drawn from the very principle itself.

Hampshire's defence of moral claims of a conventional kind is plainly consequentialist: these customary prescriptions are in his view more likely to be respected than the deliverances of an abstract morality imposed without regard for traditions, local attachment and loyalties. Since we need some moral principles to be respected, it would be a mistake to dismiss all customary principles. If Hampshire is right on the factual issue, as to some extent he is, I doubt it, any utilitarian can accept his conclusion.

The sense of familiarity we get from Taylor's essay lies in his objection to utilitarianism as a form of reductionism. He would classify contract theories of justice along with utilitarianism as "single-consideration procedures" that do not "do justice" (I don't think the pun was intended) to "the diversity of goods we have to weigh together in normative political thinking". Why we "have" to weigh diverse goods in a manner that defies the kind of weighing up that the utilitarian would like to do, is something that Taylor does not clearly state. Though there are some suggestive examples in his paper, there is not much hard argument, and there is distressing lack of any attempt to come to grips with the obvious counter-arguments that utilitarians would put. The tone of the whole essay is set by the tone of its opening sentence: "What did utilitarianism have going for it? Acting as if his opponent were dead, he contempt to fling it beneath the out of place in a volume which plainly indicates that the beast is alive and kicking."

So we come to the only philosophical essay in this collection that adds something new and significant to the opposition to utilitarianism: T. M. Scanlon's "Contractualism and utilitarianism".

I confess that I began the essay without great hopes; the title had led me to expect yet another comparison between utilitarianism and Rawls's theory of justice. Scanlon goes deeper than Rawls, however, for he has noticed that utilitarianism draws much of its strength from the contrast between its own commonsensical foundation - the obvious moral significance of the well-being of individuals - and the more obscure foundations of rival views. Hence he sets out to sap this source of strength by providing a clear account of the foundations of non-utilitarian moral reasoning. If he does not quite manage this within the twenty-five pages he takes up, he does enough to show that there is a promising contractualist alternative to the basis of moral reasoning relied upon in different ways by utilitarians such as Hare and Harsanyi.

Scanlon's contractualist alternative bases the idea of morality in a system of rules for the general regulation of behaviour, which no one could reasonably reject as a basis for informed, unforced, general

agreement. The basis of moral motivation, on this view, becomes the desire to be able to justify our actions to others on grounds they could reasonably accept. Like the philosophical approach of the utilitarians, this contractualist view has no need to appeal to any 'mysterious objective moral properties existing in the world independently of us'.

So far, so good; but for all its deeper insight into the fundamental issues, Scanlon's contractualist foundation must face the problem that Rawls's theory of justice has, in my view, been unable to surmount - the problem of showing that the normative outcome of this foundation is not, after all, a form of utilitarianism. Why is utilitarianism not itself "a system of rules for the general regulation of behaviour which no one could reasonably reject as a basis for informed, unforced general agreement"? Indeed, since there is an obvious reason for rejecting any non-utilitarian system of rules - namely, that it results in less happiness than might otherwise be achieved - why is not utilitarianism the only system of rules which no one could reasonably reject?

Perhaps that is putting the utilitarian case too strongly; but it shows the task Scanlon must face. By trying a very strict and literal definition of "contractualism", he offers a plausible reason for believing that that particular version is unlikely to result from the contractualist foundation. Some kind of "two-level" utilitarianism like Hare's, however, he admits to be a more probable candidate; and although in the end he rejects this possibility, he would be the first to admit that there is more to be said here. I hope Scanlon is planning to say more, preferably at book-length.

I shall conclude with two general reflections. First, the idea of a book on utilitarianism co-edited by a distinguished economist and a distinguished philosopher must have seemed a good one at the time. Discussions of utilitarianism are central to both ethics and welfare economics, and in recent years there has been contact between the two disciplines. Yet the approaches are still very different, and in this book economist continues to write with fellow-economist principally in mind, and philosopher with fellow-philosopher. Naturally, as a philosopher, I found the economic approach less than adequate. When they are bold, like Harsanyi, the economists are philosophically crude; when they are cautious, they become mathematically precise about matters so abstract that their conclusions are tautologies. That is an oversimplification, of course; philosophers do have something to learn from the essays by economists in this book, though they will learn it at some cost in tedious. But what would an economist reviewing this book say of the philosophical approach to utilitarianism? That it lacks rigour and precision? Perhaps; I cannot distance myself enough from my own discipline to be sure.

Second, why does utilitarianism continue to survive? As I have already said, I found Scanlon's essay illuminating on this topic more than any other. But there is also an insight to be gleaned from something Taylor says: "The modern dispute about utilitarianism is not about whether it occupies some of the space of moral reason, but whether it fills the whole space." That remark explains why Hahn concludes that, notwithstanding the difficulties he finds with utilitarianism, they do not constitute an argument for another approach. For many of the difficulties with utilitarianism found in this volume are equally difficulties for any view which gives any weight to an assessment of the consequences of our decisions on the preferences of individuals; and as Taylor indicates, no plausible view can deny some weight to these consequences. Hence the troubles utilitarianism must confront are troubles we cannot escape, wherever we turn. There is no alternative but to tackle them as best we can. That is why utilitarianism will be on the agenda of philosophers and economists for a long time.

Simon Rae

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In a Different Voice

Psychological Theory and Women's Development
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Published June 1982, £10.50.

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Buried evidence

David Ridgway

ROBERT CHAPMAN, IAN KINNES
AND KLAUS RANDBORG (Editors)
The Archaeology of Death
199pp. Cambridge University Press.
£17.50.
0 521 23775 0

The excavation of tombs has always presented the archaeologist with the pleasing prospect of a good return on a comparatively small investment of money and time. For the non-clandestine excavator, the investigation of funerary sites possesses the additional attraction of revealing ancient contexts that are patently the result of conscious ancient decisions: Stuart Piggott's famous definition of archaeology as the science of rubbish applies to settlement sites – not cemeteries. In many areas and periods, tombs and their contents still provide the most informative material evidence for chronology, life expectancy, disease, physical appearance, dress (or at least the fashion in shrouds), ethnic identity, social stratification, craftsmanship and – however paradoxically – the quality of life in general.

The editorial (and longest) chapter of *The Archaeology of Death* is prefaced by a line remembered from the Undertaker's sketch in *Monty Python's Flying Circus*, and tells us that "archaeologists need a body of theory in order to relate the mortuary data at their disposal to patterns of human behaviour within past human societies". In other words, here is a textbook of mortuary systems, appropriately rendered as unappealing to the eye as possible. The pages are large, and the text is crammed onto them in two columns of small print set close together with unjustified right-hand margins.

Chapters Two to Ten build up the body of theory promised in Chapter One by means of worked examples. James A. Brown (Evanson, Illinois) examines three cases from the eastern United States: the Spiro and Harlan phases of the Caddoan area; and the Klunk and Gibson sites of the Hopewellian period (AD 1200–1400; AD 1000–1200; 110 BC–AD 400). He lists the pitfalls that await the archaeologist who seeks to rank prehistoric burials:

(1) The apical social order may be missed... relative differences are important... different locations will be used to mark out status differences. (2) Symbols of authority may not be identified... Investigators must be particularly alert to emblems of rank such as costume (particularly head-dresses), elaborated weapons and other artefacts with ritual connections of great power. (3) Complex burial processing may create false impressions of disposal programmes. Care must be exercised in interpreting the complexities of the burial programme, lest different phases or stages in burial processing be mistaken for different statuses.

Following detailed analysis of five cemetery sites dating from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries on the Central Plains of North America, for which the ethnic identity and hierarchical structure are known ethnographically, John O'Shea (Iowa) suggests that social perceptions derived from mortuary remains "may be distorted, but distorted in a regular and predictable manner". Lynne Goldstein (Milwaukee) extends fashionable concepts of spatial organisation to mortuary analysis, represented by two cemeteries in the Mississippian cultural system (AD 900–1400). Her conclusions include the statement that "The spatial component, when used as a framework for examining the results of 'substance language' approaches, can yield an understanding of the meaning and interrelationships of the groups or statuses represented".

In the first of four contributions concerned with the Old World, Robert Chapman (Reading) addresses himself to the emergence of formal disposal areas and the problem of megalithic tombs in prehistoric Europe. He argues from an anthropological basis

that "interment in cemeteries or monuments will emerge in periods of imbalance between society and critical resources". The "dialogues with death" contributed by Ian Kinnes (British Museum) revolve around British chambered tombs and have the considerable merit of brevity – presumably because "the overwhelming proportion of information derives from earlier work which was not geared to answer the questions now being posed". Richard Bradley (Reading) reviews the contrasts between the burial patterns perceptible in the British Bronze Age Wessex and Deveril Rimbury core areas in the light of their recently established chronological overlap (which used to be succession). With the significant assistance of contemporary written texts, Klaus Randborg (Copenhagen) summarizes the data on death in the Viking Age of Denmark and relates it to the formation of the Danish State.

Jane E. Buikstra (Evanson) reports the preliminary results of a regionally based study which illustrates both the importance of the spatial dimension of mortuary behaviour and its effects upon the study of prehistoric biology. Two of the earliest (hunter-gatherer) skeletal series from the mid-western United States apparently consist of individuals rendered incapable of "normal" human activities by age or disease. It follows that

the human biologist studying prehistoric remains must be careful not to isolate himself from the source of his data, the mortuary site, or he may generalise too quickly and thus ignore the very variability which will allow him to make precise, predictive statements concerning prehistoric populations.

Finally, Della Collins Cook (Bloomington) discusses dental aspects of the middle Woodland period (second-third centuries AD) in the Lower Illinois Valley.

It will be clear from the above that the theoretical perspectives delineated in this book are those of the New (and now rather dated) Archaeology, which was originally designed to generate positions of considerable emolument for those willing to use Haig'speak in two fields of traditional archaeological endeavour – society (societal organization) and culture (the dynamics of cultural systems). How new is the body of theory that the editors have undertaken to provide?

The only remotely novel features of this collection that I can see are the assumption that mortuary theory is needed and the implicit denial by the contributors of any theoretical limitations on their knowledge of the past. Of these, the first is not proven and the second is a revival of a degree of optimism that died with the nineteenth century. The triumphant progress from the particular to the general is equally outmoded. A random example of this terrifyingly naïve strategy must suffice. Brown (on the origins of ranking) takes issue with V. Gordon Childe's well-known hypothesis that surplus above subsistence needs was a necessary condition for the emergence of chiefs, and social stratification: "However, the necessary-surplus argument was effectively demolished by the discovery that social rank existed quite independently of definable surplus (Sahlins 1972). Rankship is not instituted by the work of others (Brunton 1975)." The absence of qualification ("could exist"; "is not always instituted") in these sentences is misleading: "Sahlins (1972)" is a book called *Stone Age Economics* and "Brunton 1975" is a ten-page article in *Man* entitled "Why do the Trobrianders have chiefs?" My own view is that social stratification can be "instituted by the work of others": another anthropologically interesting community, the British Civil Service, traditionally defines one of its emblems of rank as a reward for Other People's Efforts. But as it may, this book has done nothing to convince me that outward achievements of the human mind, imperfectly – that is, archaeologically or anthropologically – perceived, can usefully be investigated like diseases of the human body. After all, clinical opportunities for testing hypotheses are less readily available to

Grave matters

Kenneth Kitchen

JOHN ROMER
Valley of the Kings
293pp. Michael Joseph/Rainbird.
£12.50.
0 7181 2045 0

In the public consciousness, the image of Ancient Egypt consists of a series of limited but strong impressions – of the Pyramids and Sphinx, of mummies and mysterious rock-cut tunnel-tombs, of the treasures of Tutankhamun and of huge temples under a blazing sun.

From the fifteenth to the twelfth centuries BC, as rulers of a vast empire extending from Syria to the northern Sudan, the Egyptian Pharaohs attempted to safeguard their lavish burials by concealing them in tunnel-like tombs cut in a desolate desert valley to the west of the Nile at Luxor, the area of ancient Thebes: in the Valley of the Kings. Even in those times, the tombs were entered and robbed of their wealth; in desperation, priests gathered up the plundered royal bodies, depositing them in a few better-secured groups, leaving the great tombs open and abandoned. These lurid events left their record in the papyri of commissions into such tomb-robbing, and in hasty docketings on the coffins and shrouds of the royal bodies.

Some of these vividly decorated tombs came on to the tourist circuit in Greco-Roman times and later were the brief abodes of Christian anchorites. They then fell into oblivion until they were rediscovered in modern times by European explorers and later hunted for and studied by archaeologists and Egyptologists, for their treasures, their texts and their information on life and death (at royal level) in Ancient Egypt.

After a succinct summary of the Egyptian setting and of the date, origin and form of the royal tombs, John Romer's work divides into two nearly equal halves – on the explorers and diggers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and on the organized excavations from the late nineteenth century to the

present, ending with a brief postscript on the current situation.

Having himself served with recording expeditions in Egypt, and having supervised the clearing of one of these great tombs, the author has close, first-hand knowledge of them.

The result is a vividly written book containing many details of interest. Many picturesque anecdotes about early adventurers and more recent scholars enliven the narrative for even the most casual reader, while for the scholar the illustrations include a variety of rarely featured details and totally fresh items, and otherwise inaccessible facts are embedded in the text. Thus, we now have available the only plan of the peculiar family of the formidable Ramesses II. We have successive plans of the progress of the excavations of the treasure-hungry T. M. Davis, whose preliminary publications too often contained the minimum possible of proper record of either tombs or their contents.

In need to study the other ancient remains of the royal Valley is clearly brought out – although it must be said (as Romer himself realizes) that the paramount need today is for total and accurate record and full publication of the tombs themselves. Physically, they are under threat from geological and hydrographic shifts – and from antiquity-thieves – the pressure of tourists and vandals. Fortunately, recent decades have witnessed not scholarly interest in the tombs but in any time since the heady days of the finding of Tutankhamun; a modern record has been begun with the state volumes by Piankoff and Hornum, and one hopes that Romer himself may issue a report on his work in clearing the tomb of Ramesses XI. For Egypt's great sites, the crying need remains everywhere the same: a full and accurate record and publication of the standing monuments, and not excavation, except where sites are actually under threat.

In short, Mr Romer's book is authoritative, informative and entertaining throughout. The illustrations are original and the quality of their colour is consistently good.

demonstrable above all from archaeological evidence. Else Roesdahl's book is very much a product of this new age of Viking studies. Its author is a lecturer in medieval archaeology at Aarhus University, a worker, literally, in the field, and she has excavated the only complete prow of a Viking ship yet discovered. *Viking Age Denmark* is an up-to-date, thorough and well documented presentation of its subject. Some chapter-headings will indicate the nature and width of her treatment: "Transport Towns", "Communications", "The First Towns", "Trade, Industries and Crafts", "Arms and Fortifications", "Art and Ornament". These are nicely rounded out with chapters on "The Country and the People", "Settlement and Survival", "Daily Life", and there are chapters on "Pagans and Christians" and "Foreign Contacts". This last deals with what perhaps a majority of English-language readers call "The Viking Movement", the aspect of the Viking Age which for most of us outweighs all the rest.

The picture of medieval Denmark that emerges is so rational, so balanced, so consonant with human nature that it looks rather like Viking Denmark with the Vikings left out. Is this the people, we ask ourselves, portrayed by Saxo Grammaticus? Are these the kin of Ragnar Hairybreast? But we should not be too surprised. The Danes (and as much may be said for the Norwegians and Swedes) were only parenthetically pirate-mongers. There is the realising evidence of their art, their homes and domestic virtues, their high regard for their womenfolk. They were skilful and often inspired craftsmen in metal, wood and stone. Year by year we are uncovering fresh evidence of their constructive skills, as in huge ramparts like the Danevirke and the fortress complexes of Pyritz and

Aggersborg; in their road-metalling, causeways and sea-defences; their memorials to the mighty dead; their shipbuilding and their house and settlement architecture. And not only the big things: they are humanists; their hundred details: their numbers; what they had for breakfast; in what containers they imported wine; how they kept the rain out; what their women wore; bellows, lugs and solder.

Dr Roesdahl would wish to extend to an earlier date the period we call the Viking Age, because certain features, dynastic and constructional, are to be discerned ahead of the decisive year 793 when the Vikings so murderously assaulted the monastery of Lindisfarne in Northumbria. The difficulty is not apparent than real. Most students recognize that there had to be some kind of build-up in Scandinavia before the first recorded raids took place; but inevitably for western Europe and the British Isles the Viking Age appears roughly coincidental with the Viking Movement overseas, c.790–1050, when the peoples we now know as Danes, Swedes and Norwegians were hammering out the shape and texture of the kingdoms we know as Denmark, Sweden and Norway, making a powerful and often painful impact on their European and colonization only within reasonable distance of home, but eastwards as far as the Baltic and Caspian, and westwards to the Atlantic Isles, Ireland, Greenland, and the eastern shores of North America.

For the story to be intelligible we need to know all we can about the Viking Age, its inhabitants, its Scandinavian, their way of life as Vikings, and its relevance to their overseas. *Viking Age Denmark* is a valuable contribution to that story, illustrated with fifty-one plates of varying quality and fifty pages of life-drawing.

Perverse effects

Anthony Giddens

RAYMOND BOUDON
The Unintended Consequences of Social Action
232pp. Macmillan. £25.
0 333 25845 2

Paradoxes of consequences have long fascinated students of human behaviour. What we do as human actors may have outcomes quite distinct from those we intend. The main "private vices, public benefits" way of expressing this phenomenon, became the mainstay of classical economics. The pursuit of naked self-interest, in the context of a competitive market, supposedly serves the ends of the community as a whole.

In recent years, theories of paradoxical consequences have been strongly influenced by game theory, which indeed is often true to its name in providing puzzles intriguing enough to while away many an hour. Consider a situation in which individual participants, each making rational decisions in respect of their interests, produce consequences which actually run counter to those interests. The most famous example of this is the "prisoner's dilemma" game. In a simplified version, this runs as follows. Two prisoners are in court. They are confronted with certain alternatives given by the judge. Each prisoner will face five years in jail if both confess, but only two years if neither confesses. However, if only one prisoner confesses, that prisoner will be acquitted while the other will get ten years' imprisonment. Neither prisoner has access to the other, so each has to guess the probable response of the other. What should the two prisoners do? The interest of the puzzle is that, if both behave rationally, the outcome will not be optimal for either. However the second behaves, the first will find it advisable to confess. For if the other confesses, the first will get five rather than ten years; if the other doesn't confess, he/she will go free rather than serving two years. The other reasons along similar lines, and both behave rationally in confessing. But the result is that each has to spend five years in jail, although they could both have served only two years.

This is an example of what Raymond Boudon calls a "perverse effect". The object of his book is to demonstrate the ubiquity of perverse effects in social life. Circumstances such as that of the

prisoner's dilemma are not just abstract games, but are chronically found in broad areas of social conduct.

Perverse effects are of interest to the social sciences, according to Boudon, in several ways. One is fairly obvious. Models such as the prisoner's dilemma game are directly applicable to the explication of human activity and social institutions. In various chapters of his book, Boudon discusses the sociology of education, and several of his examples of the uses of game theory are taken from the field of educational policy. Thus in the 1960s higher education expanded in virtually all the industrialized countries. While many looked upon such educational growth as highly desirable in itself, it also gave rise to various social problems. As educational levels rose, more and more people were taking up jobs for which they were markedly over-qualified, no different from those they could have obtained with far fewer years of educational "investment" on their part. In response to the frustrations this incurred, most countries developed what has come to be called "short-cycle" higher education – shorter courses that provide more flexible, short-term options. Few chose in fact to enter such courses. Why? Boudon suggests that the failure of short-cycle education can be interpreted in terms analogous to the prisoner's dilemma – a suboptimal result of rational decisions taken by the student population.

Research shows that people choosing short-cycle courses of study have equal chances of getting well-paid jobs to those having followed longer, traditional courses. Most students also seem to be aware of this. So one would intuitively assume that the governments did which instituted them – that a high proportion of students would choose the short-cycle courses if they make rational choices. But, says Boudon, obvious though it may appear, this assumption would be incorrect. If all the students make their decisions in a rational way, they will opt for the longer types of educational course – even though, like the prisoners, they would actually have fared better if they had chosen the shorter type. A perverse effect is at work. I shan't attempt to portray the details of his argument here. But it depends, as does the prisoner's dilemma, upon the fact that each individual is making strategic choices between the same alternatives. If, as can be demonstrated, as Boudon indicates, that independently of what the others choose, each student has an

interest in choosing the long-cycle rather than the short-cycle courses.

The fact that there are many contexts in social life in which people's intentions either rebound upon them, or produce unanticipated consequences, in Boudon's view casts doubt upon certain dominant themes in the social sciences. Many authors, he argues, are prone to exaggerate the hold of the powerful over social institutions. They tend to see the malevolent influence of power elites, or the impact of power struggles, where there may only be a series of perverse consequences intended by no one. A similar point applies to functionalist explanations, commonly deployed in social analysis. Those who appeal to such explanations typically exaggerate the internal unity of society, because institutions are presumed to conform to social "needs". Conceptions of this kind have been popular, for instance, in the sociology of education. But the example of short-cycle education shows that the nature of educational demand may become dislocated from the "requirements" of the social system, even when governments expressly formulate policies to meet those requirements. Such dislocation is

the norm rather than the exception in social life. Since there is a constant escape of the consequences of conduct from intentions, there is reason to doubt the imminent arrival of that form of society which some might welcome and others dread – a "programmed society", in which everything would be planned by technocratic controllers.

Boudon also makes an effective attack on what he calls "sociological determinism", or "sociologism", in the social sciences. Sociological determinism is that style of social thought which regards social action as the outcome of social causes – as though we were all the playthings of social causes, rather than individuals capable of rational decision-making. "The history of sociology", he avers, shows that "sociologism seems like a chronic illness ravaging it." The description is perhaps a bit extreme, but the point is sound enough. A great deal of sociology is written as if our activities could be accounted for by reference to social factors which propel us from the outside. In the face of such a perspective, it is important to insist upon what Boudon calls the "limited rationality" of human action. Avoiding sociological determinism means treating human beings as intentional

actors, having various sets of preferences, and being more or less aware of the possibilities open to them in the situations in which they act.

I have a good deal of sympathy with Boudon's account of perverse consequences. At the same time, I don't think his ideas have the explanatory scope he wishes to claim for them. Game theory probably has a considerably more limited applicability in sociology than he proposes. Its formal elegance only rarely appears to conform at all closely to the complexities of social life. Neither the principle of "limited rationality" nor an emphasis upon the unintended consequences of action have a necessary connection with game theory. Moreover there are difficulties raised by Boudon's discussion which he does not tackle. How are we to connect the identification of perverse effects to the analysis of power in society? For the first obviously cannot replace the second. We should abandon sociological determinism, but how should we set about explaining the origins of the constraints upon action? These and other equally significant issues are pushed to one side rather than answered in what Boudon has to say.

Private faces

Rosemary Dinnage

FERDINAND MOUNT
The Subversive Family: An Alternative History of Love and Marriage
282pp. Cape. £9.50.
0 224 01999 6

The Sermon on the Mount is intoxicating stuff, says Ferdinand Mount, but it is strictly for bachelors. It is not the bit about lust that is in mind; he means that taking no thought for the morrow does not bring home the groceries or pay the mortgage or get next term's school uniforms. Christ is one of the many absolutists who in Mount's view attacks or ignores the natural domestic preoccupations that are at the heart of life. The subversiveness of the family, he claims, lies in the quiet pursuit of honourable private virtues in the face of the demands of Church and State.

A considerable part of his book is devoted to refuting the views of the

fashionable school of social historians – Stone, Shorter, de Mause, Aries – who claim that personal family affection is a recent invention. This is not difficult when what Boudon calls the "limited rationality" of human action. Avoiding sociological determinism means treating human beings as intentional

He takes aim at a number of political and ecclesiastical targets as well as

once as an example of successful negotiation; while it is probable that everybody involved at the time was delighted to be able to reach agreement from such widely differing starting points, the passage of time has raised questions about its success that cannot be ignored.

Within the terms of this book, however, it is possible to call Camp David a success, because the negotiation reached its conclusion. The phrase "principled negotiation" should not be misunderstood; it describes a technique, and does not refer to anything wider than negotiating principles. Negotiation is seen as an end in itself, and the subject under discussion is not central to the process. The aim is to reach agreement by means of understanding the rules of a system that is entirely self-contained; at one stage the word "compromise" is defined as "a midway solution that both sides can live with" without any acknowledgement that there is a less complimentary sense in which the word can be used. Anyone who understands the many frequent disadvantages of compromise will be likely to feel that the book's central assumption is its central failing. Its identification of shared interests, but its failure to see that method, subject matter, and personal opinion can be separated from one another, and that negotiators are able to concern themselves with establishing consensus without reference to their own commitment to the subject of the negotiation. Even if, thought this were true, it would be poor negotiating technique to admit it.

It is a good sweeping case, though there is an implicit political moral: that all the vital and self-sufficient family unit needs is to be left alone by the busybodies (to manage its own health care during sickness? provide its own support during unemployment?) A good many families, no doubt, would welcome more busybodies on their doorsteps if they came to mend the roof or bring an overdue dose of cheque. And fraternity, after all, means the mutual support of brothers – members of a family.

Mount does overstate. The family of the past was surely not the cold-hearted work unit described by the Aries school of historians, but it was different from life in "little boxes"; for better or worse, family emotions were not so concentrated or so isolated from the rest of life. Children before this century can seldom have had such a barrage of attention and expectation focused on them as they do now; but then in the past no one, from babies to kings, was expected to sleep alone in single beds, in single rooms. Family life has become more of a secret hot-house, and so more of a scapegoat. But it is not likely to be superseded by anything cooler and more rational, and the tension between passion and pattern, private ties and communal benefit, will no doubt continue.

The newly published *Penguin Guide to the Law* (958pp. Allen Lane. £14.95. 0 7139 1356 8; Penguin paperback, £6.95) aims, in the words of its author John Pritchard, "to extract those parts of the law that seem... to be most relevant and useful to the general reader". The topic is considered under seven main headings: The Family, Housing, Employment (including sub-sections on "The Contract of Employment", "Unfair Dismissal" and "Redundancy" and "Trade Unions"), the Consumer and Business Motoring, Civil Liberties and the Welfare State, and the Legal System. The work also includes a glossary of legal terms and a section of specimen legal forms, together with appendices on advisory bodies and trade organizations.

Simple solutions

James Warnock

ROGER FISHER AND WILLIAM URY
Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In
Edited by Bruce Patton
163pp. Hutchinson. £5.95.
0 09 149370 6

It is a tempting belief that the pattern of our lives is determined at every level by a finite number of sets of rules; if we can persuade ourselves that success in our day-to-day dealings with the world is a matter of knowledge and clear understanding rather than circumstance, we are able to imagine that there is a defined, and easily mastered, path to self-improvement. Occasional failures can be explained by other people's greater familiarity with the rules, and we can therefore console ourselves with the invigorating knowledge that we need not always be losers.

This belief seems to be, or to have been, widely held in the United States; and is most apparent in the enormous success of Dale Carnegie. *Getting to Yes* admittedly presents itself as a work of greater intellectual weight than *How to Win Friends and Influence People* – its authors are Director and Associate Director of the Harvard Negotiation Project, and it contains several references to the business of international diplomacy, and it has been praised by people who must be accepted as good

judges, including Cyrus Vance, Elliot Richardson and J. K. Galbraith – but it bears similarities with Carnegie's work, given the broad scope it claims for itself, and the easy and uncontroversial nature of the assumptions on which it is based.

The book's starting point is clear enough; we are all involved in the process of negotiation every day, but we do not all make the most of the process. Most of us are asking ourselves the wrong questions about how to play – at its most simple, whether our negotiating style should be "hard" or "soft". What we should learn is the technique of "principled negotiation" – and if our opponents (or our negotiating "partners" – principled negotiation removes the adversarial element from the process) have also learnt the same, our task is made easier rather than more difficult, because we are jointly concerned to reach a conclusion – based on "objective criteria" equally acceptable to both, or all, parties. This is an admirable theory, but it may not always be capable of translation into practice. A negotiator may, for instance, find himself faced with somebody who will not, or cannot, play to the rules; not out of stubbornness, perhaps, or a sense of loyalty to some group, or people on whose behalf he is speaking.

The solution to this difficulty lies in the definition of "principled negotiation". The point is to deal with interests rather than positions. Consider the story of two men quarrelling in a library. One wants

the window open and the other wants it closed. They bicker back and forth about how much to leave it open: a crack, halfway, three quarters of the way. No solution satisfies them both.

Enter the librarian. She asks why he wants the window open: "To get some fresh air." She asks the other why he wants it closed: "To avoid the draught." After thinking a minute, she opens wide a window in the next room, bringing in fresh air without a draught.

This is arguable as far as it goes, but it does leave a number of important questions unanswered. It is not entirely frivolous to ask what the ingenious librarian would have done if there had not been a next room, or if it had contained a piece of machinery noisy enough to make concentration impossible for both men. The passage is characteristic in that it demonstrates one simple solution to one simple problem, and asks us to draw from it lessons of a very much wider application. There is no difficulty in thinking of illustrations to support the argument that conflicting positions can sometimes be reconciled by the identification of shared interests; but it is surely not much more difficult to demonstrate the opposite: in cases of greater winning and losing, and a conclusion that seeks to satisfy both parties' interests is likely to please nobody and to solve nothing. It is unsettling to find that the Camp David agreement is quoted more often than

John Pritchard

Compound cleavages

Sam C. Nolutshungu

LEONARD THOMPSON and
ANDREW PRIOR
South African Politics
255pp. Yale University Press. £17.50
(paperback, £4.50).
0 300 02767 2

Sixteen years ago, Leonard Thompson published a brief introductory text, *Politics in the Republic of South Africa*, which was reprinted five times in the United States although it had a much more modest impact here. The present work with Andrew Prior, a political scientist at the University of Cape Town, is a successor to that earlier book which also aims to "explain the basic facts concerning the peoples and the economy of South Africa, to show how the system has become what it is, and to analyse the system as it operates today". The authors also claim that their description of the "peculiarities of the South African system" is based on the data and the scholarship of the early 1980s. Since the book is published in mid-1982, that is an extraordinary claim. Their view of South Africa as a "peculiar", repressive pigmentocracy for which the Africans are chiefly to blame owes little to recent studies. Much of the work of the last decade and a half has argued that some of the most important features of South Africa which account for the emergence of its unique system of racial domination are by no means peculiar and has tried to relate apartheid systematically to capitalist development and class conflict.

The verdict on the debates on race and class is delivered firmly and briefly by Thompson and Prior: "The major cleavages in South African society are racial rather than class cleavages, and one 'race' labelled white dominates the others." However, they are willing to

make one concession: "There are of course different social classes within each of the four [racial] divisions, based on education, occupation and wealth." That is all they care to say on the matter.

The book contains brief demographic and economic surveys with useful, though familiar, tables; chapters on the "Framework of Political Life", "How the System Works", "Internal Opposition", and "External Opposition". There is a useful summary of the constitution and a brief description of recent constitutional developments. Although the book is non-theoretical, expressions like "interest articulation" and "aggregation" and "socialization" all point to some distant - theoretical inspiration. However, one will find very few new insights and little new knowledge here about how the system works. There is no discussion of the bureaucracy, or the military, or big business, national and foreign, in relation to the "articulation of interests" or, indeed, in any context whatever. There is some reference to the racial composition of the civil service, some random facts are given about two generals and their foreign experience and contacts, and the increasing political involvement of the military in politics is noted.

The discussion of internal opposition is balanced and accurate as far as it goes, but it is little more than a listing of organizations, with only the briefest mention of their nature, policies and activities. The authors rightly stress the severity of repression against those who oppose, and conclude that the changes initiated under the present prime minister are "nothing more than the latest of a long line of manipulative devices" to prolong white power and privilege. They clearly feel that apartheid, with its brutal violation of the most basic human rights, is an outrage requiring international action to end it, though, like most people, they are uncertain whether this can

occur. Sanctions, they believe, could have a serious impact if they were effectively enforced. But the West, with its equivocal attitude towards South Africa, and its preoccupation with the Soviet interest in Southern Africa, is likely to give less than wholehearted support to any such project.

One issue of profound contemporary concern which might have been explored is the obvious advantage that South Africa means to derive from that vague, if ubiquitous, Soviet interest. If it would be to the West's advantage that Soviet influence in Angola and Mozambique should be countered by a more sympathetic Western attitude to those countries, it is decidedly in South Africa's interest that there should be no improvement of relations between the United States and those countries and that, as the principal supporters of the South African liberation movement, they should be driven, by military means if necessary, into a total dependence on the Soviet Union. What African and Asian states have claimed for years at the United Nations - that apartheid constitutes a threat to international peace - may, in this regard, become only too evident, creating the need for the West to assert its own interest against the South African one.

As a basic introduction to South African politics the book may serve its purpose. Yet, it would have been more valuable if it had taken more account of recent scholarship. Thompson and Prior have simply disregarded the radical historical approaches that flourished in England in the 1960s and 1970s, and their political science is also curiously outworn. Their bibliographic notes, which are intended to introduce a relevant literature on South Africa, contain so few references to the Marxist and neo-Marxist studies that have dominated the field, and mislead, for over a decade as to be misleading.



Nguza Karl I Bond, who was three times foreign minister and at the time of his arrest in 1977 prime minister of Zaïre, photographed when in prison. reproduced from his recent book, written and published in French. Mobutu: Ou l'incarnation du Mal Zaïrois (201pp. Rex Collings. Ill. 0 86036 197 7).

Sophiatown style

Dennis Walder

LEWIS NKOSI
Tasks and Masks: Themes and Styles
of African Literature
202pp. Longman. £4.50.
0 582 64146 2

In 1951, a former Springbok fast bowler called Bob Crisp had a good idea: to start a monthly magazine for Africans in South Africa which would, eventually, sell across the entire continent. The magazine would express the black soul: it would contain African poetry, folk tales and extracts from *Cry, the Beloved Country*. When the first issue came out in Johannesburg, white liberals loved it, but the blacks did not. Crisp resigned. One of his backers took over, and persuaded an Oxford friend to join him as editor. The new publisher had no knowledge of publishing: the new editor no knowledge of African life. But Jim Bailey and Anthony Sampson soon had an amazing success on their hands: *Drum* had been born.

The secret of *Drum's* success was simple: its staff was taken from the black ghettos, and they wrote about what life was like there. Brash, tough and cynical, the *Drum* staff represented the new African - urbanized, cut off from his tribal past. They wrote - and lived - intensely. Many have not survived. But they were a remarkable generation, producing some of the best journalism, short stories - and jazz - to come out of Africa. The roll includes Henry Nxumalo, Todd Muthshikla, Can Themba, Biko Mofokeng, Casey Motsisi, Ezekiel Mphahlele - and dotted writing in a Zulu newspaper in Durban in 1953, a promising youngster called Lewis Nkosi.

Nkosi joined the Sophiatown set, sharing the violent and immediate life of the township. In which everybody lived with everybody - white, Chinese, Indian and, mainly, black. Athol Fugard was there, drawn by the talent

and vitality. It was the place for a young writer to be. Nkosi rose to become chief reporter on *Drum*, developing a typically combative style, attacking before you were attacked. Visiting American or European writers (Louis MacNeice was one) were taken to Aunt Suzie's shebeen near Marshall Square, where there was always the possibility that a police raid would provide first-hand experience of what it was really like to be a South African. It was the time of the Defiance Campaign, the last hope for peaceful change. Then came the mass arrests and, finally, Sharpeville. Protest went underground, or abroad. Nkosi was offered a scholarship to study journalism at Harvard, and he joined the growing exodus, although this meant accepting a one-way "exit permit", and exile. All his writings were henceforth banned in South Africa.

Lewis Nkosi has survived. He has established a worldwide reputation as an outspoken commentator on African literature, primarily through journalism and broadcasting. *The Rhythm of Violence*, 1984, set in Johannesburg was not a success, but it was the first play in English by a black South African for a long time, anticipating the flood of drama produced by the new generation of Soweto in the 1970s. *Home and Exile*, 1965, a collection of essays on personal and literary topics, remains an essential document for anyone interested in African, and especially South African, writing.

More recently, Nkosi has taken up teaching, and he is at present a lecturer in literature at the University of Zambia. He seems to be heading south, and towards respectability, like that other Durban exile, Ezekiel (now Eskia) Mphahlele - although the six pages of *Tasks and Masks* devoted to an exposure of the "terrifying" flaws in Mphahlele's *The Wanderers*, 1971, suggest he would prefer to be distinguished from his former colleague, who is now back in South Africa with a post at the University of

the Witwatersrand. But if *Tasks and Masks* is to be taken as an "introductory textbook" for newcomers to the field which it claims to be, then the personal animus evident in such an exposure is unhelpful. Nkosi wishes the reader of his study of the typical "themes and styles" of African literature to know that he does not pretend to adopt the "innocent eye" of the traditional, "bourgeois" critic. But there is another kind of pretence involved when a demolition job is mounted at such length and without a hint of the critic's own background and hence *parti pris*.

The chapter in *Tasks and Masks* which deals with Mphahlele's work, "Southern African: Protest and Commitment" does however offer a welcome recognition of the talents of Bessie Head - who, as it happens, served her apprenticeship on *Drum's* sister Sunday newspaper, *Post*. Yet, as Nkosi points out, unlike so many other writers from this background she is neither fast-paced nor politically aware; rather, she reveals in a series of fine novels a "moral fluency", an understanding of the "problems of belonging, of close inter-personal relationships". Nkosi singles out *Mari*, 1971, for special praise, for its "delicacy of feeling and subtle evocation of character". Fairly traditional criteria too, one might say.

Elsewhere Nkosi is more balanced. He provides judicious, often stimulating, if not very original accounts of some of the important issues - the language "crisis", negritude, the role of history and many of the important works, including full discussions of all three traditional genres, the novel, poetry and drama. He is particularly persuasive on modern African poetry, to which he devotes two substantial chapters. He seems to respond best to those with whom he might most claim kinship, the urban elite, linguistically, culturally self-aware, and liable to be attracted by evolution, although unable or unwilling to participate in it. Ransavo, Rabearivelo

and Rabemananjaro, cosmopolitan Malagasy poets, elicit from Nkosi close and sympathetic attention, and a convincing application of his overall argument - announced at the start as an obsessive idea that African writers are "easily divisible" into two groups: those who see their society as unchanging, like a mask turned perpetually in the artist's hands, "each time revealing nothing more than what it is, the work of some skillful carver who originally imparted to it its outstanding features"; and those writers who conceive "of the act of writing as the carrying out of social tasks". The latter are, for "obvious political reasons", mostly in east and southern Africa.

As Nkosi applies this distinction, the remarkably rich and varied literary manifestations of the continent do begin to fall into a kind of order. And its application enables the critic to proceed to the level of insight which relates the different uses of, for example, traditional Malagasy folk poetry - the so-called *hain-teny* or proverb formula - by the poets concerned, to their respective personal and class positions: Rabearivelo, "detruncated" intellectual whose reworking of the *hain-teny* conceals his political stance; Ransavo, whose reads like translation; and Ransavo, the rediscoverer of his own culture, who integrates the *hain-teny* into his work, thus bringing together "task" and "mask".

Lewis Nkosi refers to himself as having once been "bold and incautious and still very young" when he suggested that African writers should be judged with the same "rigour" as their Western counterparts. *Tasks and Masks* could hardly be accused of modesty or caution; "rigour" is evident, as is the fact that this is derived from the modern European literary tradition, although by no means exclusively so. Lawrence, Joyce, Kafka, Pound and Sartre are the names invoked. But there is something elderly, now, about a book on African literature which carries little awareness of the recent upsurge among African

literary critics of serious interest in the criteria by which that literature may be understood, appreciated and judged. Nkosi waxes enthusiastic about Amos Tutuola's modernism, although it is some thirty years since *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* was "placed" thus by European critics unaware of its roots in Yoruba folklore and the living tradition of West Africa. As the Nigerian novelist, dramatist and critic, Kole Omotoso, pointed out three years ago in a long essay, *The Form of the African Novel* (published by Akure in Ibadan), the whole issue of the impact of oral narrative upon African fiction needs to be considered before we can adequately assess its nature and direction. The "classics" of African literature, from *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* to *The African Child*, from *Things Fall Apart* to *A Dance of the Forests*, as well as more recent works such as Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Devil on the Cross*, all draw inspiration, energy and matter from indigenous oral sources, and cannot any longer be dealt with primarily in relation to the European tradition.

It is Nkosi's abiding strength, however, that his critical eye is derived from the Western tradition. Nobody can deny that African writing owes an enormous debt to the colonial languages and literary forms; and the time has come to pay off the debt; and it will continue to be important to hear what a critic as deeply informed by the attitudes and concerns of the urban, cosmopolitan culture as Nkosi has to say.

South Africa and Southern Mozambique: Labour, Relations and the Making of a Relationship by Simon E. K. Mlambo (University Press, 1981) 0 7190 083 0) analyses the institution of Mozambican migrant workers in the Transvaal, import trade through the Portuguese territory and Mozambique's privileged position in 1875 to the renewed competition between the two countries of 1975.

Table manners

Anthony Holden

DAVID M. HAYANO
Poker Faces: The Life and Work of Professional Card Players
205pp. University of California Press.
\$17.45.
0 520 04492 4

David M. Hayano is either a cultural anthropologist at the University of California who happens also to be a poker-player, or a poker-player who happens to be a cultural anthropologist at the University of California. Throughout this book he seems as uncertain as the reader where his true loyalty lies. One thing, however, is certain: when, as an anthropologist, he is engaged in studying poker-players Hayano has achieved one of the professional anthropologist's fundamental aims, by himself becoming a fully-fledged and accepted member of the species under his scrutiny. He calls the resulting practice "auto-ethnography".

To any serious student of poker, in *Poker Faces*, the blindingly obvious is all too frequently dressed up in such pseudo-scientific language. I had never before realized, for instance, that the innocent activity in which I indulge every Tuesday night with six other steep-eyed examples of the species *homo sapiens* could be summarized as follows: "Individuals typically make observations of their situation in order to assess what is relevantly happening around them and what is likely to occur. Once this is done, they often go on to exercise another capacity of human intelligence, that of making a choice from among a set of possible lines of response. Here some sort of maximization of gain will often be involved, often under conditions of uncertainty or risk. 'Aw', as my friend Al would say, 'shut up and deal'."

Or again, take what poker-players call "reading" their opponents and their cards. According to Hayano: "Labels for playing styles regulate the quality and quantity of game interactions between competing players and lie at the heart of the conception of poker as a practical exercise in sociocultural reading." He sees his task as setting the card-rooms of Gardena in their proper sociological context, yet he is never able precisely to define even that. All he does is alter the language in which poker-players, deep-dyed philosophers all, express attitudes and reach conclusions about their business; he adds little to their own sum of human knowledge about what motivates and drives them to choose this way of life to the exclusion of any other. Towards the end of his thesis, Hayano protests that gambling is an area of human activity neglected by his profession, too often filed away under the heading of "social deviancy" or even psychopathology. Though every gambler would no doubt agree with him, he perhaps protests too much. For the conclusion and academic impediments of *Poker Faces* smack much too much of self-justification, its acknowledgement that all Hayano has done is to codify a somewhat unusual and colourful area of human activity into the jargon of his trade. Do we learn much, for instance, by being told under the subject-heading "Social Organization of the Cardroom" that "peer group criticism at the card table is the major sanctioning agent for social control and for regulating improper behaviour and adhering to general cardroom norms"? In other words: if you drop your cards beneath the table, you may get shot.

The most interesting observation which Hayano makes is that most professional poker-players labour under a suspicion that they should be doing something "worthwhile". He himself confesses that often, especially after a winning streak, he wondered whether to give up his university professorship for the life of a full-time poker player. Yet he devotes an entire agonized (and inconclusive) section to the difficulties of defining the term "professional poker-player": he does not consider that the definition might simply be "anyone who earns his or her living playing poker".

Hayano should come clean. He is an

intelligent man who enjoys the extracurricular thrills and intellectual challenges of the poker table, and as an anthropologist saw a rare chance to combine work with pleasure. Only when describing a hand in which he was a participant does his writing come to life. The most interesting section of the entire book - the necessary explanation of how he fetched up in the smoke-filled salons of Gardena rather than the rarefied anthropological air of Papua New Guinea - sneaks in only under the Appendix heading "A Description of Fieldwork Methods".

Most heinously, in the view of a fellow poker-player, Hayano the anthropologist constantly uses the terms "poker-playing" and "gambling" as if they were synonymous. His years of field research in Gardena should have told him, if nothing else, that a gambler is a type of poker-player. The card that you can win regardless of the facts you are dealt, often without even revealing them, removes this particular art from the sordid realm of roulette, horse-racing, the football pools and other such forms of unashamed gambling. If Mr Hayano still cannot grasp this, he is welcome to join our Tuesday game any time he likes.

Summer tales

Timothy d'Arch Smith

PETER ROEBUCK
Slices of Cricket
140pp. Allen and Unwin. £7.95.
0 04 796062 0

BRIAN SCOVELL
Ken Barrington: A Tribute
176pp. Harparr. £7.95.
0 245 53867 4

County Champions
198pp. Heinemann. £7.95.
0 434 98024 2

MIKE BREARLEY
Phoenix from the Ashes: The story of the England-Australia Series 1981
159pp. Hodder and Stoughton. £7.95.
0 340 28088 3

The trouble with cricket books is that there are too many anecdotes in them and three out of four in this batch follow the pattern. Indeed, the author of the book on Ken Barrington has encouraged Barrington's friends to fill half his pages with such stories. Peter Roebuck in his offering of rough male talk from the Somerset dressing-room introduces quite a number, and *County Champions*, an anthology of unashamedly partisan essays on the first-class counties by writers, journalists and cricketers, is equally generous in its ration.

Nevertheless, all three books have something to recommend them to the browser. Mr Roebuck pays respects to his coach, a courtesy often forgotten in cricketers' reminiscences (although John Snow wrote a poem to his). Bill Tidy deserves applause for his frank admission that his county, Lancashire, was responsible for transforming spectators into "a crowd", a beer-swilling, can-dancing mob. Brian Scovell's biographical section on Barrington is sympathetically and diligently done and there is a useful appendix of Barrington's career figures which shows up a bad mistake in those given by this year's *Wisden*. Barrington, whose batting skills England, at a lean period, required and possibly exploited, was a complex personality not unlike Boycott. Not a fast scorer (he and Boycott were both dropped for slow scoring) Barrington once produced a test innings extraordinarily out of character, hitting 115 of 127 balls in two and a half hours. Curiously, this was when he was at his lowest, ebb, mentally and physically exhausted. Boycott too once played such an innings, although not in a test match. Was he, one wonders, under the same sort of stress?

The person who would have perceived that something was amiss

Wine mysteries

Jancis Robinson

ANTHONY HANSON
Burgundy
378pp. Faber. £12.50 (paperback £4.50).
0 571 11797 X

DAVID PEPPERCORN
Bordeaux
428pp. Faber. £12.50 (paperback £4.50).
0 571 11751 1

Wine, along with home video equipment and running gear, has been one of the few consumer markets to have shown impressive growth over the last five years or so - and publishers have not been slow to take advantage of this. We have seen so many titles (though admittedly *The Jigger's Guide to the Médoc* has yet to appear) that the literate imbiber is now justified in demanding something genuinely new in each one.

The Faber series of books on wine, patiently edited by Julian Jeffs, had,

until the recent publication of volumes on each of the world's most famous wine regions, restricted itself to accepted knowledge from the most impeccable sources in the most detail. With *Burgundy* new ground is broken, not only for Faber but in the literature about this most complex vineyard grouping in general. For years there have been vocal complaints and literary hints about the poor value offered by this famous wine region. Anthony Hanson, who is a wine merchant and Master of Wine, spells it out as never before - in print.

His thesis is that Burgundy offers more disappointments more expensive than any other wine region in the world, whether through ineptitude in the cellar, greed in the vineyard or malpractice in the blending vat. A look down the contents page leaves the reader in no doubt that beans are to be split in chapters headed "The Development of AC Legislation, or The Buyer is Still Deceived" and "Magician's Hands". The first half of the book is devoted to a scholarly (and in some cases sensational) explanation of setting and methods in the ancient duchy, while the second half consists of a detailed survey of 350 growers and merchants charted on a geographical survey of the whole region, from Chablis to Beaune.

Hanson's most pointed accusations concern the red wines of Burgundy's heart, the Côte d'Or, and were formulated as a result of his three years working there, in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Had this book been completed and published soon after his return, the Burgundians would have been forced to accept all his criticisms as shamefully valid. But *Burgundy* has been a painfully slow labour of love and the inhabitants of Beaune and Nuits-St-Georges may now content themselves that some things at least have improved since they were subjected to Hanson's scrutiny. It is also sad that he has been swept away by this bit of accusatory zeal over Burgundy's sins, however salutary,

that he all but ignores the region's irreplaceable gifts to connoisseurs around the world.

Burgundy may be far from a celebration of good things, but it does convey an enormous amount of informed opinion and conscientious, detailed knowledge not available elsewhere, especially on vineyard ownership (though the really demanding reader might wish that Hanson's approach was as subjectively critical in Part Two as Part One).

Hanson needed only courage and tenacity in offering something new in *Burgundy*; the writer on such well-described ground as *Bordeaux* faces a much stiffer task. David Peppercorn, another wine merchant and Master of Wine, is as equal to it as any, and has wisely decided to capitalize on his twenty-five years in the upper echelons of the wine trade and a tasting experience that goes back to his father's table. After a useful tour around vineyards and cellars, we are taken on a chateau tour of the region, lingering as most have done before in the Médoc, hurling through St Emilion and Pomerol and almost ignoring the basic appellations we can all afford to buy. Our guide's formula of concentrating on history and tasting notes means that he makes the most of his own academic training and the lessons of his wonderfully practised palate but may leave some wanting to know more about the individual quirks of each property's approach to vine-growing and wine-making. With its concentration on the best chateaux and the ancient vineyards, *Bordeaux* is certainly a celebration of good things, but the disadvantage of its format is that it makes certain omissions - details of AC laws, or Pierre Coste, the white wine innovator, for example - inevitable.

Those looking for a soothing draught are recommended to Peppercorn's handsome work on Bordeaux, while those in need of a bracing tonic should tackle Hanson's brave analysis of Burgundy.

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P.H.

Conceiving to deceive

D. W. Pearce

THOMAS BALOGH
The Irrelevance of Conventional Economics
262pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson.
£16.50.
0 297 78028 X

The worst enemy of economics is economists. Once the essential after-dinner jokes about three-handed economists never reaching conclusions are out of the way, and a sober look is taken at economics as a mode of thinking, rather than a body of doctrine, there is a persuasive case for the experts of the art to stick together. The genuine forces of disagreement would not be suppressed, so that all the ingredients for a Kuhnian transition to new paradigms would still be there, but the basic virtues of economic science would stand more chance of being aired. Those virtues are extremely basic, and are best exemplified by observing that, but for economists, the idea that any decision implies the foregoing benefits of an excluded alternative would have no currency. We could all then live in the Wonderland world of politicians who can glibly declare one billion pounds (reputedly the immediate cost of the Falklands expedition) to be within the "margin of planning" in government expenditure, while simultaneously forcing the closure of hospitals and the dissolution of public services in the name of expenditure control. If nothing else, the social rate of return is high from having in our midst a breed of professional who, like a well-bred parrot, simply repeats that there ain't no such thing as a free lunch.

Possibly Lord Balogh would both sympathize and be irritated by such a view. For, like his earlier works, this sustained polemic against the conventional practice of economics stresses the value of a case-by-case, flexible approach to economic problems. It argues for less intellectual detachment and more politically muddled boots among applied economists. But it derides the professional academic and, for that matter, the professional economic adviser too. The academics are too preoccupied with intellectual crossword-puzzles, the answers to which may be satisfying to the immediate collegiate club that meets to agree them but the results of which are practically useless; if the truth be known, they can hardly be said to have raised the well-being of anyone other

The straight and narrow

Roderick Floud

FRANÇOIS CROUZET
The Victorian Economy
Translated by Anthony Forster
430pp. Methuen. £18 (paperback, £7.95).
0 416 31110 5

It is a brave man who, in days of international academic specialization, dares to write a textbook on the history of a country other than his own; it is an even braver one who allows it to be translated, exported and exposed to the competition of home-grown products. The preconceptions of readers, their knowledge of chronology and the demands of syllabuses are all likely to be effective barriers to trade. Even if naked chauvinism is not. So the courage of François Crouzet in turning his lectures at Sorbonne history undergraduates into a text for British consumption is undoubted and, as his previous work on British economic history will lead his many admirers to expect, he has done an admirable job.

One of the chief merits of *The Victorian Economy* lies, paradoxically, in Crouzet's adoption for economic history of a chronological unit drawn from political history, that of the reign

of Victoria. Students are always told not to do any such thing, but starting at 1837 allows Crouzet to ignore the eighteenth-century transition and the growing pangs of early industrialization and to concentrate instead on the maturing industrial economy. He is less successful in stopping at 1901 but he achieves, nonetheless, a unity of approach which reduces the importance of the turning-point of 1873, the traditional start of the Great Depression. Thus both the slowness and the ultimate power of changes in industrial structure and the workings of the economy are admirably conveyed.

Crouzet fails however to exploit, as one should in international trade, his comparative advantage. The perspective achieved by his starting and finishing dates disappears as he comes closer to his material and as the preoccupations and preconceptions of British historiography bulk larger in his vision. It is no insult, for it shows how admirably Crouzet knows his subject, to say that this book could have been written by a number of British economic historians, but it is nevertheless a disappointment. The view from across the Channel is rarely if ever used, as surely it must have been in Crouzet's original lectures, to emphasize the points at which British economic development was unique, or even simply different from that of France. The work of Patrick O'Brien

on agriculture in the two countries has shown how illuminating the comparison can be, yet nowhere here is there a hint of the same approach applied to industry or to the service sector. It is particularly frustrating that the final chapter, "The decline of the British economy?" does not set Britain firmly within the international economy; perhaps this is why Crouzet's answer is so tentative.

The neglect of the service sector, apart from banking, railways and sea transport, is another disappointment, since even finance and transport are seen mainly in their role as providers and consumers of capital. There is little here on the distribution of goods, little on taxation and the growth of the administrative bureaucracy, little on the inequality of income and wealth and its social and demographic correlates. Education is considered mainly from the partial viewpoint of debate on the training of British entrepreneurs. As Crouzet himself says in the introduction: "This is basically straightforward economic history, though some problems of social history closely linked with economic affairs—for instance the pattern of landownership—had occasionally to be considered."

But is this how the economic history of Britain should now be written? Crouzet is careful and fair in giving

prerequisites for unequivocal advice are a common measuring-rod (money) for all the costs and benefits of a given activity and faith that market mechanisms automatically bring about the maximization of some critical economic indicators and the minimization of others. Yet the former is, at best, a critique of extreme (and non-practising) cost-benefit analysis, while the latter is the creed of the reform American-Austrian gangster school of market-place economics. Neither alone is a prerequisite for giving advice and, in practice, the advocates of the former are invariably those who reject the latter outright.

From another author these would be instances of logical error. In Balogh's case they reflect only the literary convergence of sound ideas in a long and sustained polemic. Quite simply, the normal rules of criticism do not apply here. It is better to read the book in small doses, selecting what one wants from both the text and the extensive footnotes, delighting in the viciousness of some of the criticism and

admiring the force of personality and commitment that keeps the themes of practicality, relevance and concern to the fore throughout. *The Irrelevance of Conventional Economics* is not a critique of economics on a par with other critiques; closely examined, only some of the objects of Balogh's derision fall down, while one is more than once tempted to point out that recent work in the subject has "taken on board" his very well-founded objections to certain areas of economics.

But it is the spirit of the critique that matters and here the book is quite telling. It remains the case that what good economists can do is underplayed, while the farcical nature of some of their intellectual activity is correctly underlined and exposed. One could therefore have wished for a more forceful final chapter on the positive contribution economics can make, instead of the rather abrupt ending we do get. But there are gems in every chapter and the intellectual irritation value is high.

credit to what he thinks of as the "new" economic history, the application of quantitative methods and economic theory to the study of the past. As he recognizes, the work of Donald McCloskey and others has altered views of the late nineteenth-century economy, dismissing simplistic notions of entrepreneurial failure as a cause of British economic decline, while the application of the language of economics—some of it appearing difficult, in this book—has sharpened many questions. But even the new economic history has done little to alter the questions, and it is here that Crouzet's book serves to expose the limitations of a restricted view of what British economic history is.

British economic history today, and for some time, has adopted too narrow a view of its role; too other economic historians are concerned with artefacts, with industrial production, with capital in the form of trains, factories and machines. The existence of economic history as a subject distinct from history or economics, and thus the need to map out a defined subject area, has contributed to this, and the more recent and deplorable separation of social from economic history has made matters worse. As Sir Michael Posner, to whose memory this book is dedicated, often said, British economic history neglects "the big questions", and narrow problems lead too often to narrow approaches to them.

"The big questions" are essentially questions of connections, of the connection for example between population growth, social structure and the distribution of income and wealth, and technological change. To take one example, social and class take one example, the gap between structure, income and players in British "gentlemen and players" in British industry, together with the opportunities for and barriers to social mobility, is fundamental to our view of Britain's past, and a prior issue to that of the development of individual industries. To take another, the connection between marriage and economic opportunity, a connection of Wrigley and Schofield's recent work on *The Population History of England*, has been given very little attention.

The Victorian Economy shows, therefore, that we badly need a "new" economic and social history, which would consider the big questions and bring to bear on them the insights separately developed in the various specialisms into which the subject has become fragmented. As a summary of the state of the art Crouzet's book cannot be faulted, but it is a state which no one can be satisfied with.

Population Change and Social Structure: Social and economic implications of the recent decline in fertility in the United Kingdom, by David, Eversley and Ronald Killmann. (Eversley, *Population* 01731.6345.3) reports on changes in population decline in each of the two countries

Liberating the Renaissance

Robin Briggs

FRANCES A. YATES
Lull and Bruno: Collected Essays
Volume 1
279pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
£12.50.
0 7100 0952 6

It is sad to record that the publication of the first volume of Dame Frances Yates' Collected Essays now takes the form of a memorial to this notably lively, original, and productively Renaissance scholar. Dame Frances was also a controversial figure, and one may be inevitable that her reputation should now suffer some backlash from the sometimes indiscriminate praise which greeted most of her later books. The present publication is likely to remain very marginal to any such reevaluation: five of the six essays it contains were published in the *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* between 1938 and 1960, only the sixth, taken from the *Festschrift* for Hugh Trevor-Roper, being a rather brief exercise in her later manner. While all the pieces are of interest, not least for the light they throw on their author's intellectual biography, the collection fails to cohere as a whole, and most of the contents are so specialized that it is hard to see who would actually need this book, other than those libraries with good Renaissance collections which probably have the originals on their shelves already.

The volume opens with two long and complex essays on the thirteenth-century Catalan philosopher Ramon Lull, one aspect of whose influence on the Renaissance was later explored in *The Art of Memory*. These essays are characteristic of Dame Frances's initial approach to these difficult and often exceedingly obscure thinkers: she employed close study of the texts, comparisons with likely sources, and the comments of followers to tease out the meaning and significance of her quarry's thought. Their most substantial contribution was perhaps to associate Lull's ideas with those of the sixteenth-century Irish Neoplatonist John Scotus Erigena; this helped not merely to elucidate Lull's art, but to explain why later Scots such as Nicholas of Cusa were keen collectors of Lull's works. Although historically an important contribution to Lullist studies, the essays do not pretend to offer any general account of Lullism. Within their limited context it was

therefore perfectly reasonable for Dame Frances to largely pass by the significance of Arabic sources, notably al-Ghazzali, as well as Lull's central concern to unite the Christian and Moslem worlds.

More disturbing was the sudden burst of ill-judged enthusiasm in which she called Lullism "this great monument which towered for so long over the European scene", and claimed that "its influence over five centuries was incalculably great". It is asserted that "The Renaissance seized on Lullism with intense enthusiasm": "the Renaissance" in this context turns out to mean Nicholas of Cusa, Pico della Mirandola, Lefèvre d'Étaples, Agrippa of Nettesheim, Giordano Bruno, John Dee, Paracelsus, Descartes, and Leibniz. A curiously heterogeneous group, some of whose members might have been surprised to find themselves included in the club. Both Pico and Descartes referred to the history of Oxford more in connection with his much more central interest in Cabalism, the latter only to assert the superiority of his own system. The claim that Leibniz's system was the "end-product" of "a large-scale revival of Lullism in eighteenth-century Germany" is supported by no evidence at all, and can only be a gross oversimplification.

The next three essays, on Giordano Bruno, were all written around 1940, preceding by more than twenty years the book which is likely to remain Dame Frances's most enduring achievement, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (1964). They therefore long predated her key discovery that Bruno was a follower of the supposed Egyptian sage Hermes Trismegistus, and much of their content needs careful reassessment in the light of her author's later views. It is therefore somewhat bizarre to publish them unaltered, without even an appendix to bring them into line with later work; the statement that "Bruno himself undoubtedly believed that he was a sincere Catholic", for example, was later to be demolished by its author. Equally curious is the failure to make any adjustment to the essay on Bruno at Oxford, in the light of the description of his visit by George Abbott, discovered in 1960. The publishers surely owed it to Dame Frances to find an editor who could have coped with these obvious difficulties, which are no reflection on the scholarship of the original articles, but seriously diminish their utility to their reappearance. Indeed, the whole argument of "The Religious Policy of

Giordano Bruno", rather tenuous from the outset, is very difficult to reconcile with the true nature of Bruno's religious beliefs as Dame Frances subsequently expounded them.

In "Giordano Bruno's Conflict with Oxford" two major arguments are deployed. Bruno's defence of Copernicanism should not be equated with an enthusiasm for modern science, Renaissance attitude to the occult, on the other hand, were profoundly anti-medieval, in that they and their colleagues had eliminated the most advanced ideas of medieval logicians and mathematicians from the curriculum, in favour of a deadening concentration on grammar and rhetoric, and a return to straightforward Aristotelianism. The first point largely stands, but the second is based on a few isolated pieces of evidence, most recent work on the history of Oxford suggests that it is scarcely more than a caricature. Dame Frances's insistence for the *chiaroscuro* emerges all too clearly from her repeated efforts to set off her heroic protagonists—Bruno and John Dee—against a background of small-minded or repressive pedants. She never seems to have understood that the universities in Elizabethan England were actually the centre of both scientific and occult studies, even those who pursued such interests in London or elsewhere having normally been initiated into them at university. John Dee was not the only occult-cum-astrological consultant around the court; his prestige was rivaled by that of his associate Thomas Allen of Gloucester Hall, Oxford. Many of those who attended or participated in the debates with Bruno would have been well able to judge his scientific and philosophical pretensions, and one is tempted to think that they got his

measure better than Dame Frances ever did.

Although often combined with wider intellectual activities, the dominant concern of most dons was theological; even the more cautious public versions of Bruno's eccentric religious views must have shocked them profoundly. Once he was rash enough to pass within range of the Inquisition his heterodoxy proved fatal. In Dame Frances's picture of the intellectual development of the age his execution in 1600 was "a symbol of the reaction against the daring spiritual adventures of the Renaissance". This is surely a misconception. The Catholic church of the Counter-Reformation certainly became far more repressive, as Campanella and Galileo were also to discover, but the motivation for the clamp-down was overwhelmingly religious, stemming from the shattering experience of the Reformation. Occult philosophy and Galilean science were both caught up in this reaction, but they were far too peripheral to have had any part in causing it. John Dee's semi-disgrace after his return from Bohemia and Poland in 1589 is not evidence for some comparable "spirit of reaction" in Elizabethan England; it arose quite plainly from his own folly in abandoning his patrons and engaging in prolonged attempts to invoke spirits. Foxe had in fact attacked Dee by name as "the great conjurer" as early as 1563, and Dee could hardly expect official protection to continue once he had demonstrated the truth of the charge. The repeated claim that he was "the philosopher of the Elizabethan age" will not bear examination, despite his genuine achievements as a mathematician. His links with Leicester, Sidney, and the Queen herself gave him some importance, but there is no evidence that he exercised more than a marginal influence on any of them.

References to Neoplatonic and occult themes abound in the literature of the age, but they prove nothing on their own, any more than wild identifications of Dee with Faustus, Prospero, or King Lear. There was a large stock of materials of a more or less occult or symbolic kind, available to any moderately well-read person much as Freudian concepts are today. Hermeticism itself was a loose collection of eclectic ideas which merged imperceptibly with wider currents of Neoplatonism. In fact Dame Frances overinterpreted both Bruno and Dee when she tried to give their thought a systematic character it lacked in practice—Bruno was never a consistent Hermeticist, and both men were essentially syncretists, who tried to weld together disparate borrowings from Christian and pagan philosophies. It is as easy to establish links between these rag-bag systems and the surrounding intellectual world as it is hard to give them any real meaning.

It must be apparent that I think Dame Frances was radically mistaken in large parts of her general view of the Renaissance. This is in no way to deny that she was a scholar of great learning, or that nearly all the features she discerned were genuinely present in the thought of the time. The boldness with which she pursued these elusive questions has been of great service, and has greatly thickened the texture of our picture of this complex, often contradictory, intellectual world. Even when she propagated new errors, these really did tend to be more stimulating than old truths, while many will always thank *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* as a liberating work of great power. The best way to honour its author would be through a vigorous and progressive debate on the significance of her work, even if one eventual conclusion is that she was not the best judge of her own discoveries.

Vanishing physics

Jonathan Barnes

NORMAN KRETZMANN (Editor)
Infinity and Continuity in Ancient and Medieval Thought
367pp. Cornell University Press.
£20.75.
0 8014 1444 4

Is matter continuous, capable of division *ad infinitum* into ever smaller bits? or is it atomic and does it consist ultimately of minimal granules of stuff? What of space? and of time? Are they atomic or continuous? And do matter, space and time stand together, or could it be that matter and space, say, were atomic while time was continuous? Such questions belong to the physicist and they are to be decided empirically in the light of physical theory. But they have, evidently, a mathematical aspect; and they also have, no less evidently, a logical aspect. For the concepts of continuity and infinity are puzzling, and logicians hope to be of service in the elucidation of puzzling concepts.

Ever since Zeno put his money on the tortoise, philosophers have been fascinated by the wiles of Infinity. Despite their lack of scientific savvy and mathematical expertise, the Greeks had things of profundity and importance to say on the subject. The Medievals, building as always on the foundations laid by Aristotle, constructed fortresses, or follies of fantastical ingenuity.

Take, for example, Richard Kilvington, a fourteenth-century Oxford man. Supposing, with Aristotle, that time is infinitely divisible, he argues that the notion of *infinitum* happens over the notion of *given* instant (e.g. *infinitum* after a given instant, e.g. *infinitum* before a given instant). It might well be supposed that "infinitum after *x*, *x* is *F*" is true just in case there is some interval *t* (however short) such that *x* is *F* at every instant within that interval. (Infinitum after *x*, *x* is not *F* at the next instant after *x*, and there is no next instant.) Given that definition, it is easy to see that from

"Immediately after *t*, *P*" and "Immediately after *t*, *Q*", there follows "Immediately after *t*, *P* and *Q*". Yet that inference, according to Kilvington, is invalid.

For consider a line *AB* divided into proportional parts at *A*, *A*, *A*, ... such that $AA_1 = \frac{1}{2}AB$, $A_1A_2 = \frac{1}{4}AB$, etc. Number the parts from left to right, and call the odd-numbered parts *O*s, the even-numbered parts *E*s. Set a sphere *S* at *B* and let it begin to move toward *A* at an instant *t*. Now Kilvington ingeniously argues that immediately after *t* *S* touches an *O* and immediately after *t* *S* touches an *E*. But it is false that immediately after *t* *S* both touches an *O* and touches an *E*.

The example shows that the inference to "Immediately after *t*, *P* and *Q*" is invalid, and the invalidity of the inference shows that the given definition of "immediately after" is mistaken. Kilvington implicitly suggests a different and subtler definition which will both save the phenomena and avoid the invalidity. Thus: "Immediately after *t*, *x* is *F*" is true just in case every interval *t*-*t'* contains at least one instant *s* such that *x* is *F* at *s*.

The papers edited by Norman Kretzmann are the proceedings of a conference. They do not, despite the publishers' blurb, constitute "a unified and coherent whole". (Why should they?) Five are on ancient philosophy—Rudolf Carnap, on Aristotle, on various fourteenth-century thinkers. The ancient papers do not hang together; nor, unfortunately, do they provide an appropriate preparation for the medieval material. Moreover, the papers are not uniformly excellent: one of them presents a remarkably confused account of Aristotle's attack on the Atomists; another provides a paradigm of how not to reconstruct the history of ancient mathematics.

The medieval part of the volume is far better. Its six papers divide into three pairs. John Murdoch discusses "Ockham" and the logic of infinity; Edward B. Lavin discusses and polishes one part of his account, Edith Sylla's paper on the theories of alteration, developed by Kilvington and Walter Burley, is similarly embellished by

Calvin Normore. And Paul Spade attempts—gallantly but unconvincingly—to confer philosophical respectability on one of the two views about the "instant of change" which Kretzmann dissects. The medieval papers discuss commentaries and treatises which are not readily available to the scholar. One of the best features of the volume is its generous publication, in footnotes and appendices, of long extracts from those Latin texts.

At the end of it all, a doubt remains. The medievalists were men of remarkable acuity and unusual subtlety. A study of their thoughts on infinity has all the fascination of a Ximenos crossword. Yet is there, I wonder, any more to it than that? The logic of men such as Ockham and Kilvington subserves no viable physics. If they coruscate, their coruscations are evanescent—fizzing fireworks without solid substance.

Medieval and Renaissance Studies 9, edited by Frank Tiro (260pp., Duke University Press, \$34.75, 0 8223 0457 0) contains the proceedings of the Southeastern Institute of Medieval and Renaissance Studies for the summer of 1978 and is the result of a cooperative programme between Duke University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The papers, which were originally presented as public lectures, include an Apocryphal Panel on the "Rudolf Carnap" on Aristotle, on various fourteenth-century thinkers. The ancient papers do not hang together; nor, unfortunately, do they provide an appropriate preparation for the medieval material. Moreover, the papers are not uniformly excellent: one of them presents a remarkably confused account of Aristotle's attack on the Atomists; another provides a paradigm of how not to reconstruct the history of ancient mathematics.

We apologize that on the cover of *The TLS* dated August 6, in reference to the review of Peter Partner's book *The Murdered Magician*, the incorrect plural form "Knights Templar" was printed rather than "Knights Templar".

Hurrying on down

Hilary Land

JOHN EATWELL
Whatever Happened to Britain?
168pp. Duckworth/BBC Publications.
£4.95.
0 7156 1639 0

This is a book which attempts to analyse the reasons for Britain's economic decline and concludes with some policy proposals for breaking out of what John Eatwell calls "the vicious circle of cumulative decline" and into the "virtuous circle of growing demand and productivity growth".

Dr Eatwell starts by taking a gloomy look at the weak performance of the British economy and the resulting poor quality of life enjoyed by the British compared with their European neighbours. He dismisses the conventional wisdom that the blame lies with big unions, big companies and big government: Britain does not have the worst strike record; big foreign companies are not less efficient than smaller ones; and British governments do not tax their citizens more heavily or spend more on welfare than other so-called advanced industrial nations. Instead these institutions should be seen as "agents operating in the economy and what we must do is to understand better the working of that economy which, in Western nations, is

above all a market system. Only then will we be able to achieve economic growth once again.

Eatwell then looks at the development of the market system, its key institutions and, just as important, the ideas which interpret it. He examines how the prevailing ideas and theories have oscillated between those based on the belief that the market is an automatic mechanism which, if left alone, can ensure the efficient allocation and use of resources; those based on a denial that the market necessarily embodies any such beneficent mechanism and therefore requires State direction. Apart from the first three decades after the Second World War, when Keynesian ideas prevailed (at least at the level of the overall management of the economy but not, the author regrets, at the level of specific industries), the dominant belief in the past one hundred and fifty years in Britain has been in the self-regulating market. In other words the best markets are "free".

At least that is the publicly stated view, but Eatwell argues that the extent to which a country practises what it preaches depends on its position in world markets. While Britain was in the process of becoming one of the leading industrial nations in the nineteenth century, she was in a ready-made position to practise and her access to foreign markets was hardly based on trade alone. Having achieved

a dominant position in the world economy, Britain then actively espoused free trade, as did the United States after the Second World War and, more recently, Japan. Drawing on the economic development of Japan, Germany and France, Eatwell goes on to argue that protectionist policies are necessary in order to strengthen a country's home market, upon which economic growth crucially depends when a sustained expansion of the world economy cannot be relied upon. The rest of the book is devoted to spelling out what these policies would involve for Britain.

Historically, foreign demand has played a more important role in industrialization in Britain than in other countries and financial interests have been more concerned with the prosperity of international dealings than with that of the domestic economy. What is of paramount importance now, therefore, is a set of strategies to "subjugate" the interests of the financial community to those of manufacturing industry. Eatwell very heavily on a number of "stepping stones" and highly influential ones but argues that a high growth-rate in demand for British manufacturers requires direct control of capital exports, control to prevent further import penetration and direct State influence on investment, and hence a change in the structure of Britain's industrial base. He is also prepared to tread on trade union toes

for he argues in favour of incomes policies, albeit in a context of lower taxes and with top priority given to reducing unemployment. As he says in the concluding sentence of the book "It will not be easy".

To deal with all the serious issues raised in the space of 150 or so pages (or in the eight half-hour television programmes from which the book derives) is a tall order, and it is hardly surprising that in some respects Eatwell's analysis and proposals are unconvincing. Although he knocks on the head a lot of conventional, or at least monetarist, wisdom (if that is not a contradiction in terms), he also espouses the view, expressed so well in Tony Crosland's *The Future of Socialism* some twenty years ago, that economic growth is not only a necessary but a sufficient condition to reduce inequalities. Sadly, as the recent high growth-rates in some Southern and Central American countries demonstrate, poverty is not reduced and indeed may even worsen with economic growth. The book does not examine the processes which have sustained inequalities in Britain's post-war years or indeed between the industrialized nations and the Third World and therefore does not discuss the kind of redistributive policies needed to reduce them. As John Eatwell argues, radical change is needed then, these have to be an explicit part of the analysis; economic growth is no panacea.

Population Change and Social Structure: Social and economic implications of the recent decline in fertility in the United Kingdom, by David, Eversley and Ronald Killmann. (Eversley, *Population* 01731.6345.3) reports on changes in population decline in each of the two countries

Author, Author

Competition No 85
Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than September 17. A prize of £10 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or failing that the most nearly correct, in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration. Entries, marked "Author, Author 85" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. The solution and results will appear on September 24.

1 She lifted the lobster clear of the table. It had about thirty seconds to live.
Well, thought Belacqua, it's a quick death, God help us all.
It is not.

2 ... the film returned to its place, the pulse fluttered—stopped—went on—throbbed—stopped again—moved—stopped—shall I go on?—No.

3 "Not about a motor-cycle?"
"No."
"One with overhead valves and a dynamo for light? Or with racing handlebars?"
"No."

Competition No 81
Winner: Brenda Little
Answers:
1 Then the portles divided and their shapes were shouted in chorus by

countless domesticks. The sunshiny room was packed with men of a noble nature dressed like the earl in satin knickerbockers etc and with ladies of every hue and every age and every rank in the gay throng. Dukes were as sought as there were a good lot of princes and Arch Dukes as it was a very superior levie indeed.

Daisy Ashford, *The Young Visitors*.
2 Mrs Keston talked nonsense the whole time, hardly giving Lila time to answer, they passed up the drive to the house, it was a lovely old place surrounded by a park filled with beautiful trees, which was in full sight of the sea. They went into the dining room, Mrs Keston put the dog in its basket, tied her hair before a mirror, languidly sat down & calved a chicken.

Ronald Firbank, "Lila" (printed in Miriam J. Benkovitz, *Ronald Firbank, A Biography*).

3 I most earnestly wish to leave the Ladies I am now with, Miss Simpson is indeed (setting aside ambition) very amiable, but her 2d sister, the envious and malicious Sukey is too disagreeable to live with. I have reason to think that the admiration I have met with in the circles of the Great at this place, has raised her Hatred & Envy; for often has she threatened & sometimes she has deavoured to cut my throat. Jane Austen, *Pride*, chapter 8.

John Coates